A Short

DESCRIPTION

Of the Difference

BETWEEN THE

Bond-Woman and the *Free*,

As they are the

Two Covenants.

With the Characters and Condition of each of their Children.

The Second Edition corrected.

To which is now added,

An Anſwer

To Mr. *Frothingham*'s late Letter,

concerning Baptiſm.

By ISSAC BACKUS,

Paſtor of a Church in *Middleborough*.

"*How happy then ſhould we vain Mortals live,*
"*Could we good Counſel take, as ſoon as given!*"

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THE PREFACE.

THE chief occaſion of the firſt publication of the enſuing Sermon, was becauſe of what is ſaid therein concerning *Baptiſm*; and the reaſons therefor were given in the following manner.—I was educated from a child in the contrary principles to thoſe I now embrace concerning baptiſm; and my education had this to enforce it, that it came from progenitors who were ſundry of them eminently godly, whoſe inſtructions, examples and prayers, I truſt I ſhall bleſs God for to eternity. And after I was bro't to the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, I made a public profeſſion in that way; and have ſince been called (though moſt unworthy) to preach the goſpel, and to take the charge of a flock, in which I practiſed *Infant-Baptiſm*: All theſe, and ſome other things concurred to bind me in that way; but the irreſiſtable evidence of divine truth broke through them all. Tho' when this matter was firſt brought in diſpute among us, I laboured under peculiar diſadvantages, having my mind heavily burthened with a ſenſe of paſt neglect of duty in things of another nature, which at times made me afraid of looking into theſe matters, leſt I ſhould be left of God to embrace an error; and this, together with the hot diſputes, and vehement urgings that we had among us on both ſides, toſſed and *ſifted* my ſoul moſt terribly; after which I was much overborne

borne with melancholy and discouragement for a long time. Yet having since, through divine mercy, obtained sweet deliverance and establishment, them words have often been with weight upon my mind, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

And being sensible that many of my brethren are labouring under some of the same difficulties that I did, and having a view of several things in this affair, that I have not met with in any human writings, I was inclined to yield to the request of those who desired that this discourse might be published.

These were the reasons which were given in 1756; and I must acknowledge to the glory of God, that its success has exceeded my expectation; and since the first impression was disposed of, it has been often asked for; and having been repeatedly requested to publish an answer to Mr. *Frothingham*'s letter, I thought I would reprint this, and add that to the end of it. I am far from delighting in controversy, therefore at first I only made a few remarks on his letter, and sent it to him last *July*; but he gave me no satisfaction for the misrepresentations he has made of facts, as well as principles. And a christian friend who has been one of his hearers, wrote to me in *October*, that Mr. *F.* would not let him see what I had wrote, and desired I would publish it. And now I would commend what I have done to the blessing of God, and to the serious consideration of his people.

ISAAC BACKUS.

Middleborough, January 25, 1770.

The Case of the Bond-Woman.

GAL. IV. 31.

So then, Brethren, we are not the children of the Bond-woman, but of the Free.

ALTHOUGH mankind are awfully inclined to disregard God's law when in a careless state, yet when wounded with conviction, instead of coming to Christ, they fly to the law and their own works for relief. And tho', as one observes, man's legal disposition has little need of being encouraged by legal preaching, yet many will teach people in that way; which seems to have been the case among the *Galatians*, that occasioned the writing of this epistle. It seems that some teachers had brought in the same doctrine there, which before was preached to the disciples at *Antioch*, namely, that except they were circumcised and kept the law of *Moses* they could not be saved. Which was then called a *subverting their souls*; and is now called a *perverting the gospel of Christ*. And the Apostle gives them smart warnings against these snares, and intimates that the reason why they were so much inclined to the law, was because they did not hear it, nor know its true nature and strictness.

neſs. And in order to open the caſe plainly to them, he reminds them of *Abraham*'s two ſons which he had, one by a *bond-maid*, the other by a *free-woman*; which he ſhews to be an allegorical repreſentation of the two covenants. And after ſome diſcourſe upon each, he concludes with theſe words, *So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bond-woman, but of the free.* The words may naturally lead us to enquire,—who each of theſe women are, and alſo to look into the characters and condition of their children.

I. Who is this bond-woman? The Apoſtle anſwers, that it is *Mount* Sinai *in* Arabia, *and anſwereth to* Jeruſalem, *which now is, and is in bondage with her children*, ver. 25. From that mount both the moral and ceremonial laws were given; and it appears evident that both of them are included here. The ten commands were given from thence, and the firſt tables were broken; the ſecond were put into the ark and there were kept whole; which ſignifies that tho' man broke them, yet they are kept whole in Chriſt; to which ſome reference may be had in Pſalm. 40. 7, 8. *Lo I come to do thy will—thy law is within my heart.* This law is ſummed up in love to God, and to our neighbour, concerning which Jeſus ſaid to the lawyer, *This do, and thou ſhalt live*, Luk. 10. 28. Which is the tenor of the old covenant, as appears by Gal. 3. 10, 12. From whence we may ſee how univerſal the terms of that covenant are, as to perſons, time and things. *Every one*,—muſt *continue, in all things*,—or he falls under the *curſe*. Hence the Apoſtle's concluſion is certain, to wit, that *as many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe*, becauſe no mere man can fulfil the terms of it.

That the ceremonial law is alſo included here, under the name of the *bond-woman* appears not only from its being given at *Sinai* as well as the other, but likewiſe

wise because in this description of her the Apostle mentions *beggarly elements*, and *days*, *months* and *years*, with *Jerusalem*, as she then was with her children holding zealously to *circumcision*, ver. 9, 10, 25. & chap. 5, 2. Those institutions of worship, and even the second giving of the tables of the moral law, did, as was now observed, point to Jesus Christ, but the *Jews* had turned all into works, which creatures must *do* in order to be saved; in which sense it was a *yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear*, Act. 15. 10. And tho' they were *shadows of good things to come*, and were so improved by antient believers; yet I conceive that one design of the ceremonial as well as moral law, was more clearly to discover to self-conceited and self-righteous man, his polluted and helpless condition, and his necessity of a Saviour, since *thousands of rams*, or *ten thousands of rivers of oil* could never take away either the guilt or defilement of his sin. *Mic.* 6. 7, 8. Hence our Apostle says, *The law entered, that the offence might abound*; and, *it was added because of transgressions*. Rom. 5. 20. Gal. 3. 19. But instead of taking those institutions according to their true design, these false teachers insisted upon christians observing them as *conditions of being saved*. They pretended to preach Christ's gospel, but they clog'd it with *doings* in order to receive, instead of *receiving by faith* in order to do; and herein they *perverted the gospel of Christ*. Chap. 1. 7. and 3. 2. And when any new testament institutions or duties are urged now in that line, the gospel is as much *perverted* as it was then. So that by the bond-woman, I understand the covenant of works in general, and all the ways in particular wherein men seek life by what they can do, either by duties of morality, or by observing any ordinances and forms of worship whatsoever.

II. Let us consider who her children are, and what a condition they are in.

And

And here the case is very plain that the children of the bond-woman, are all that are *born after the flesh* (ver. 23.) that is, all mankind in their natural condition. But should any say that *Ishmael*'s being born after the flesh, intends an unlawful birth, his mother not being *Abraham*'s lawful wife: I answer no, by no means, for then he would have been a bastard, and such an one must not come into the congregation of the Lord, *Deut.* 23.—but he was circumcised and admitted to outward privileges as well as *Isaac*. This objection might as well be laid against four of *Jacob*'s sons, as against this, their mothers being maids or handmaids before; yet they are ever reckoned to make up the twelve tribes of God's *Israel*. But it is evident beyond dispute, that his being born after the flesh, does not intend a being *illegitimate*, but only that he had no other than a natural birth: he was never *born again*, without which none can enter into the kingdom of God. And so now all who have only a natural birth are children of the bond-woman. *Paul* says of himself, and other saints,—*We are by nature, children of wrath, even as others.* Eph. ii. 3. And he tells the *Romans*, that he had proved both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that they are all under sin, *Rom.* iii. 9.—*Jews*, *Pharisees*, and all the world are guilty before God, ver. 19.

And never did a child more naturally run to its mother for help, than man when wounded with a sense of guilt flies to his own works for relief: his cry is, *Have patience with me, and I'll pay thee all:* but very sad is the condition of such souls. They may justly be called children of the bond-woman for these reasons. 1. Because their work is hard. Slaves have often both hard work to do, and are drove hard in it to do a great deal: so is the case here; the law requires not only that which is hard, but that which is impossible for us to do. It requires us to make us a new heart, and a new spirit,

as we would escape death. *Ezek.* xviii. 31. And it demands that we make recompence for all past faults, and walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity, as we would hope to live. *Ezek.* xxxiii. 15. Yea, it follows the soul up so, that it says, *If thou keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, thou art guilty of all.* Jam. ii. 10. I know some say that God cannot justly require of us more than we can do. But this discovers men's awful blindness. What! is it become an unjust thing for this glorious Creditor to demand his full due, because man is turned bankrupt, and is no way able to pay it! (*Luk.* vii. 42.) O heaven-daring madness! Nay this sets aside all that Christ has done as vain, for he came upon this very footing; namely because we were *without strength, therefore in due time he died for the ungodly,* Rom. v. 6. *And what the law could not do,* (i.e. justify a sinner) *God sent his son* to do. *Rom.* viii. 3.

2. Souls under the old covenant are like bond-servants in this, that they can claim no right to the inheritance, or even to a continuance in the family, but may be turned away, notwithstanding all that they have done, when the master thinks proper.—*The servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth ever.* Joh. viii. 35. Since the law is broken, man can claim nothing by it, but wrath and damnation. *The law worketh wrath.* (Rom. iv. 15.) *and as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse.* Gal. iii. 10. So that after all their performances which they boast themselves in, the sentence will justly be given out, and executed upon them.—*Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman, shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman.*

3. Bond-servants, when they have toiled and laboured many years, are no more releas'd from their bondage, than when they began: so all that are under the law, let them fast twice in the week, and make many and long

long prayers, and be as exact as ever the *Phariſees* were, in all their walk; yet our Lord aſſures us, that they muſt have a righteouſneſs beyond all this, or they can in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven. *Matt.* v. 20. —By the deeds of the law, no fleſh living can be juſtified in the ſight of God. So that every unbeliever, will eternally remain under condemnation after all their doing. Ah! deplorable caſe indeed! well might the apoſtle think that thoſe who deſired to be under the law, did not hear it, nor know its true nature and ſtrictneſs. Surely if they did, they would ſoon cry (as *Iſrael* did at *Sinai*) for a mediator to ſtand between God and them.—Hence I proceed,

III. To ſhew who the *free-woman* is, here ſpoken of. And by this I underſtand, firſt the glorious covenant of grace, made between the Father, and the Son, before the world began. Therefore God ſays, *I have made a covenant with my choſen—I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one choſen out of the people.* Pſal. lxxxix. 3. 19. The ſum of which covenant (for I cannot be large in deſcribing of it) is, That the Son of God ſhould aſſume our nature, and in that nature perfectly obey the law which we have broken, and bear the puniſhment due unto us for ſin, and ſo make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in an everlaſting righteouſneſs, thro' which God could be juſt, and yet the juſtifier of the ungodly:—As the fruit of which, the Father engaged by the influences of the holy Spirit, effectually to draw many of the ſons of men to Chriſt; work faith in their hearts, juſtify and ſanctify their ſouls, and keep them by his power, thro' faith unto eternal ſalvation: *Heb.* 2. 9—17. *Pſal.* 40. 6—8. *Dan.* 9. 24. *John* 16. 7—13. *Rom.* 8. 29, 30. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2—5.

Which glorious plan, is ſo far from deſtroying, or ſetting aſide the law, that it eſtabliſhes, yea magnfies, and makes it honourable (*Rom.* 3. 31. *Iſai.* 42. 21.) and

ſhews

shews how heinous every breach of it is, even so great that no transgressor of that law could escape eternal punishment without a perfect satisfaction for every offence against it. But by Christ's obedience and sufferings there is a way opened wherein the greatest sinner may be pardoned, and God's image be re-instamped on his heart, and that he may come to enjoy all divine blessings here, and for ever more. Hence the Lord says, *This is the covenant that I will make with the house of* Israel, *after those days*;—*I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.* Heb. viii. 10.

Further, by the free-woman is intended the gospel-church in her pure standing—Hence in our context she is called *Jerusalem* which is above—which is the mother of us all (ver. 26.) So in *Heb.* xii. 18—24. it is said that we *are not come to the mount that burned with fire*, but we *are come to mount* Sion, *and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly* Jerusalem,—*to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven*——*and to Jesus the mediator of the new-covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of* Abel.—On mount *Sinai* the fiery law was proclaimed, which gendereth to bondage; but now on mount *Sion*, or in the church of the living God, is proclaimed the gospel of peace, and salvation: and souls are brought to embrace the same. All the saints in heaven and earth, make but one catholic church: but it is in the gospel church here below that God appears to publish his grace, and to draw others in: therefore we are told that, *The law shall go forth out of* Zion, *and the word of the Lord from* Jerusalem, and many nations shall flock in, *Isai.* ii.—And again, *The Lord shall send the rod of his strength out of* Zion;—the effect of which will be, that his *people shall be willing, in the day of his power*, Psalm.

cx. 2, 3.—In ſhort, by the free-woman, we may underſtand the glorious plan of ſalvation, laid in the eternal mind from everlaſting, which in time has been made manifeſt, firſt by gradual diſcoveries thereof in the old teſtament, and then by Chriſt's actually coming in the fleſh, and working out ſalvation, which he began to preach himſelf, and 'twas afterwards confirmed unto us, by them that heard him, whereby the goſpel church was gathered, and increaſed: His uſual way of bringing others in, being to cauſe *Zion* to travail, and ſo to bring forth children; for God is the Father, and the church the mother, of all the ſaints.—The Apoſtle here (ver. 27.) adds a paſſage from the 54th of *Iſaiah*, where, note, that the foregoing chapter concludes, with the happy fruits of Chriſt's ſufferings, viz. That he ſhould *ſee his ſeed, juſtify many*, &c. upon which the church who had been deſolate as a widow, is comforted with a declaration that her maker is her husband, and that ſhe ſhould have a numerous offspring, and her ſeed ſhould inherit the *Gentiles*, &c.—Which leads us

IV. To deſcribe the character and ſtate of her children. And here we are told, that (as the child of the bond-woman was *born after the fleſh*, ſo) the child of the free-woman was *by promiſe*. God promis'd that ſon to *Abraham* long before he was conceived in the womb; and he exerciſed a ſtrong faith in that promiſe, by which *he gave glory to God*. Rom. 4. 20. And 'twas through faith that *Sarah* alſo received ſtrength to conceive this ſeed. *Heb.* xi. 11.—There appeared nothing more than the actings of nature in *Iſhmael*'s birth: but in *Iſaac*'s there was faith on both ſides; which made him a wonderful type of the ſeed here pointed at. He was promiſed before he had a being; and ſo was every child of the free-woman here ſpoken of: They were *choſen in Chriſt, before the world began*. Eph. i. 4. And *God that cannot lie, promiſed eternal life*, ſo early. Tit. i. 2. Therefore Chriſt refers

to

to this promise, in his glorious prayer, *Joh.* xvii. 1, 2. *Father,—glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life, to as many as thou hast given him.* But this election of grace is not known to us, 'till we are born again: therefore, as *Isaac* was born according to promise; so every one of these who are promised to Christ, shall be converted in due time: hence he says, *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me: and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Joh. vi. 37. Such are *born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Joh. i. 13.

These souls may well be called children of the free-woman, because,

1. They are set *free* from that condemnation, and dreadful load of guilt which they lay under before. *There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,—for the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made them* free *from the law of sin and death*; yea *so that no things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate them from his love.* Rom. viii. 1, 2, 38, 39. Agreeable to this is what our divine Master tells us, Joh. v. 24. *that he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*——

2. These children are set free from satan's tyranny. By nature they are his slaves: he is called the *prince of this world; and the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.* Joh. xii. 31. Eph. ii. 2. Hence we are told that, *Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,* Christ *took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage.* Heb ii. 14, 15. Christ casteth satan out, and takes from him all his

his armour, wherein he truſted, and *divideth the ſpoils.* Luke xi. 22.

3. They may be called children of the *free-woman*, becauſe they are made free from the dominion of ſin.—Chriſt tells us that, *Whoſoever committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin: but if the Son ſhall make us free, we ſhall be free indeed*, Joh. viii. 34, 36. And *Paul* told the *Romans*, that being made *free from ſin*, they *became the ſervants of God*, had their *fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life*: yea ſays he, *ſin ſhall not have dominion over you*; becauſe *ye are not under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 14, 22. Sin takes occaſion by the law, and often beats down, and overcomes ſouls, when they eſſay to reform and turn to the Lord, by throwing their paſt tranſgreſſions and guilt in their way, and repreſenting to them, that ſuch guilty creatures as they, can never come to a holy God; and therefore they had better go on and get what pleaſure they can in ſin, for they'll never have any thing better.—And God's own children are often woried here, when they have backſliden from him; and ſatan will not be wanting, to help to keep them back:—hence he is called *the accuſer of the brethren, which accuſeth them before God day and night.*—The ſpirit of God *convinceth* of ſin, and the devil *accuſeth* of ſin; but one ſpecial difference between them lies here,—The one ſhews us our tranſgreſſions in order to awaken us to repentance and reformation, and ſays, *It is high time to awake out of ſleep*, and *the time paſt of our lives may ſuffice, and more than ſuffice, wherein we have ſerved ſin:* but ſatan ſays, 'tis in vain to turn now for there is no help for you. Nay becauſe ſouls are got once into his ſnare, he claims a ſort of propriety in them, and if at any time they would attempt to reprove another for iniquity, he will immediately throw their own faults in their teeth, and tell them that 'tis in vain to pretend to deal with another, when

they

they are so vile themselves; and so because we have once done *wrong*, he would make *that* a sufficient argument against our ever doing *right* again. O this cruel adversary! how miserably are sinners befooled, that they'll hearken to him more than to Jesus Christ!—But what shall a poor soul do when the tempter throws such things in his way as he knows he is guilty of? he can't deny the charge. Why we are told that *they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death*, Rev. xii. 11. Therefore, O *Soul*, if satan tells thee of thy guilt, learn to overcome him by flying immediately to the blood of the Lamb; who, if we confess our sins, is (not only merciful and gracious, but also) *just and faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, 1 Joh. 1. 9. Does the tempter say thy sins are very heinous? Learn to make that an argument with Christ, saying, *Pardon O Lord mine iniquity; for it is great*, Psal. xxv. 11. Which leads me

4. To another point of their freedom, which is *open access to God.*—When *Adam* had sinned, he was turn'd out of Paradise, and cherubims, and a flaming sword were set to guard the way of the tree of life, *Gen.* 3. 24. But now thro' Christ we have access by one Spirit to the Father. *Eph.* 2. 18. Saints have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but they have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry *Abba Father*, Rom. 8. 15. And they may come with as great freedom as children do to a father, for the blessings they need, *Luke* 11. 13. Yea, we are bid to be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, to let our request be made known to God, *Phil.* 4. 6.——Once more,

5. They are made free to serve God, and walk in his ways, so that his commands are not a *yoke of bondage*; but a *law of liberty* to their souls. *Jam.* 1. 25. And as

on the other ſide, the children of the bond-woman drag on like ſlaves, and they ſay of God's ſervice, *what a wearineſs is it?* ſo the children of the free-woman obey him, not out of ſlaviſh dread; (but like free born ſouls) they ſerve him WITHOUT FEAR, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of their lives. *Luk.* 1. 74. 75. Hence *David* reckons it his freedom to obſerve the divine will; ſays he, *I will walk at* LIBERTY: *for I ſeek thy precepts*, Pſal. 119. 45. And the ſaints at *Galatia*, being brought into this freedom, the Apoſtle (in the words next after our text) chargeth them to ſtand faſt in that liberty, wherewith Chriſt hath made them free; and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

In ſhort, the children of the free-woman are freed from the condemnation of the law, from the power of ſin and ſatan, and have freedom of approach to God thro' Jeſus Chriſt; and it is made their freedom and liberty to walk in holineſs all their days, and they have the liberty of Chriſt's houſe, and have a right to all the privileges of the ſons of God here, and are heirs of an incorruptible inheritance above; and by and by they ſhall be received to that glory: and in the great day, their bodies ſhall be raiſed from the duſt, and ſhall be delivered from the *bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God.* Rom. 8. 21, 23.—And when the bond-woman, and all her children ſhall be caſt out into outer-darkneſs: then ſhall theſe children of the free-woman be openly received to enjoy the kingdom, prepared for them before the foundation of the world.—*Mat.* 25.—

Let us now proceed to ſome Improvement of what has been ſaid.

USE I. We may here ſee the great folly of all thoſe that ſeek ſalvation, either in whole, or in part by their own doings. This mount *Sinai* gendreth to bondage,

dage, and those who would get life by the law, let 'em come before it and see the darkness, fire and smoke, and hear the thundrings and the fiery law, that comes from thence. Surely if souls come here, they will soon see the need of a Mediator to stand between them and this God, who is a consuming fire. Alas! how blind are men, that they should ever imagine that they can satisfy divine justice, or get life by a broken law! *Tell me ye that desire to be under the law; do you not hear the law?* What does it say? Why it says, *If the wicked restore the pledge, give again* that *he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life* WITHOUT COMMITTING *iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die*, Ezek. 33. 15. Observe the terms well, you must restore the pledge, give again that you have robbed; not only what you have unlawfully taken from your fellow-men, but also what you have done against the eternal God; for he says, *you have robbed me, even this whole nation*, Mal. 3. 9. You must fully pay that dreadful debt, and walk in the statutes of life for the future, without ever committing another sin, else there's no life by that law.—If you say, that this is too strait; be intreated to look a little farther into the nature of the law, and you will find it is for strait, that Heaven and Earth will pass away, before one tittle of the law can pass away, 'till all be fulfilled, Matt. 5. 18. When God treats with men in the old covenant, he deals with them according to the strict tenor of it: and when he treats with them in the covenant of grace, then tho' their debts are very great, yet, *when they have nothing to pay, he frankly forgives them* all, *Luke* 7. 42. But sinners vainly expect some of the blessings of grace, while they yet cleave to the law.

USE II. Hence we may learn who have a right to the privileges of the new covenant: *viz.* those (and those only) who are born again. The children of the free-woman partake of her blessings; but the children of

of the bond-woman, ſhall not be heirs with the children of the free-woman. I am ſenſible that there are many contentions among profeſſors of religion about theſe things. Many think that ſinners may claim a right to ſome of the *promiſes* of grace: particularly ſuch as theſe —*Aſk and ye ſhall receive, ſeek and ye ſhall find.* And *if any man lack wiſdom, let him aſk of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.*—But if they look a little further, they are told that they muſt *aſk in faith*, if they would think to receive any thing from the Lord, *Jam.* 1. 5, 6, 7.* Indeed here God appeals to their conſciences, and ſays, *are not my ways equal?* (Ezek. 18.) *are not your ways unequal?* If you keep under the old covenant, I deal with you according to the tenor of it: if you perfectly obey its precepts, you ſhall have the bleſſings promiſed: but he that offends in one point is guilty of all; and then there is *tribulation and wrath upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil*, Rom. 2. 9. The promiſes and threatnings of the old covenant belong to the children of the old covenant: and the promiſes of the new covenant belong only to her children. Hence ſuch alone are ſtil'd *heirs of promiſe*, who have *fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope ſet before us*, Heb. 6. 17, 18. None others can claim the promiſes of grace, for, *All the promiſes of God* IN *Chriſt Jeſus, are yea, and* IN *him amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. Therefore to thoſe only that come to, and receive him does he give power (or privilege) to become the ſons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12. And if ſons, then heirs, to all the bleſſings of heaven, *Rom.* 8. 17.—And as theſe alone are heirs to thoſe eternal bleſſings; ſo none others have a right

* I readily grant that all the bleſſings of grace are held forth to the world by way of *promiſe*. (See Act. 2. 39. Gal. 3. 14.) But I wonder how any think to claim a right to the promiſe without believing it. The inſtant that the ſinner receives the promiſes as truth, he commences a believer: Hence, the *ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe.* Gal. 3. 22.

right to the ſpecial privileges of Chriſt's houſe here below: this I ſhall enlarge more upon.

As for preaching, exhortation, &c. God has given them forth in general to the world, and calls all men every where to repent: But ſome imagine that the Lord's ſupper was appointed for a converting ordinance, and ſo that unconverted perſons, if moral, ought to come to it: But if it was appointed for converſion, ſurely the profane have as much need of that as any; tho' 'tis evident that this is children's bread, and therefore by no means to be given to dogs. *Matt.* vii. 6. Many others think that Baptiſm is not confined only to ſaints, but that their natural offspring are alſo to partake of it. And I find that the main arguments for both, are fetch'd from the conſtitution of the old-teſtament-church, holding that to be moddled according to the new-covenant:—Though here in our context, we are told that, *This Agar is mount Sinai,—and anſwereth to Jeruſalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children*: i. e. the Jewiſh church in her legal ſtanding: that church and the goſpel-church are ſet as wide apart as the old covenant and the new. In *Heb.* viii. the covenant at *Sinai*, is called *Old*; and God ſays expreſly that the new-covenant is *not according to* that; and that old conſtitution we are told, was then *ready to vaniſh away*, ver. 9, 13. The original conſtitution of that church was ſuch, that it took in whole houſholds, and ſo a whole nation.—— Natural generation (being born of profeſſors of that religion) gave a right to circumciſion, and ſo to all the privileges of that church: And a being bought with an *Hebrews* money, gave the ſervant a right both to circumciſion and the paſſover, *Exod.* xii. 44. And the covenant that *Moſes* mentions in *Deut.* xxix. took in ſuch as had not an *heart to perceive, eyes to ſee*, nor *ears to hear*. But *Paul* ſhews clearly that in the new-teſtament, *The children of the fleſh are not the children of God: but the children*

of the promiſe are counted for the ſeed, Rom. ix. 8. And leſt any ſhould ſay that a being born after the fleſh, meant an unlawful birth, he immediately adds the inſtance of *Jacob* & *Eſau*, as exactly parallel, who were not only both born of one mother, but alſo at one time; and yet *Eſau* was in as bad a caſe as *Iſhmael*, ver. 10—13.

But what will, I apprehend, ſet this matter in the cleareſt light, is to conſider it in the line of *type* and *antitype*.—It is abundantly ſhewn in Scripture, that the *Jewiſh* church, and the forms and ordinances thereof, did ſhadow forth, and typify heavenly things, *Heb.* viii. 2—6. and ix. 9, 23, 24, &c. The ſeed of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Iſrael*'s being ſelected out of other nations, and being redeem'd with almighty power, and bro't near to God, to be his peculiar people, and to partake of thoſe ordinances and privileges which no other nation then enjoyed, did remarkably ſhadow forth God's ſpiritual *Iſrael*, whom he hath choſen and by almighty grace redeemed; *Out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation.* Rev. v. 9. And as the Lord ſaid to *Iſrael* at *Sinai*; *Ye ſhall be unto me a kingdom of prieſts*, (*Exod.* xix. 6.) ſo theſe ſaints ſay, *Thou haſt made us unto our God kings and prieſts*, ver. 10. And in the fore-mentioned 9th of *Romans*, *Paul* evidently ſhews, that as *Iſrael* literally, was choſen out of other people: ſo that *Iſrael* ſpiritually are choſen out, from among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. The ſame apoſtle calls the old-teſtament diſpenſation the *Letter*; and the new-teſtament, the *Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. That church had a literal houſe and temple where God's name was fixed, and his worſhip confined, *Deut.* xii. 13. 1 *King.* viii. 29.

But in the new-teſtament we are confined to no place, (*John* iv. 21.) but the *ſaints are God's houſe*, who are *builded for his habitation thro' the ſpirit*, Eph. ii. 20,—22. That old temple was built with ſtones which *Hiram*'s ſervants hewed: but this with *liv.ly* (or living) *ſtones*; that

that was a *worldly ſanctuary*, (Heb. 9. 1.) but this is a *ſpiritual houſe*;—there was offered fleſhly ſacrifices; but here *ſpiritual* ones, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5.—* Hence, an outward cleanſing was required, in order to receive the ordinances of that church: but here that which is ſpiritual, even the *purging of our conſciences from dead works*, in order *to ſerve the living God*, Heb. ix. 13, 14. And here let me remark one thing that is not generally obſerved, and that is, that a ceremonial cleanneſs was particularly requir'd in a child, before he might be circumciſed; which plainly appears in the firſt appointment of that ordinance, in that he muſt not be circumciſed 'till eight days old, *Gen.* xvii. 12. The reaſon of which is ſhewn in *Lev.* xii. 2, 3. which is, that when a woman had born a man-child, ſhe ſhould be unclean ſeven days; and on the eighth day he ſhould be circumciſed: *i. e.* he muſt be circumciſed as ſoon as he was clean; which by the way proves undeniably, that circumciſion in it's original appointment, was deſign'd to be a part of the ceremonial law; notwithſtanding what many ſay to the contrary. Therefore from hence I conclude, that as outward cleanneſs was neceſſary in order for circumciſion; and none might partake of it without; ſo that ſpiritual cleanneſs is abſolutely neceſſary now, in order for any to receive Baptiſm, or the Lord's Supper aright.——

Theſe brief hints may furniſh us with an eaſy anſwer to many objections, that are often urged againſt our refuſing to give theſe precious ordinances to the unconverted.

* Should any think that my diſcourſe here, too much favours the ſcheme of thoſe who deny the outward uſe of Baptiſm. I reply, that perſons experiencing of this ſpiritually, is ſo far from diſproving the need of the outward uſe of that ordinance, that the Apoſtle *Peter* makes the evidence of perſons being baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, to be a ſufficient proof that ſuch are meet ſubjects *of*, and ought to be baptized *with* water Baptiſm. *Act.* x. 47, 48. and xi. 16. which is ſuch an evidence for our practice, as I never yet ſee any writings on that ſide pretend to confute.

verted. I ſhall ſpeak more particularly as to Baptiſm, and that will ſufficiently anſwer the other; for none will plead for perſons coming to the Lord's Supper, who have not a right to Baptiſm.

1. Object. God ſays to *Noah*, *With thee will I eſtabliſh my covenant*—and *come thou and all thy houſe into the ark*, Gen. vii. 18. And *Peter* tells us that the *like figure whereunto, even baptiſm doth now ſave us, (not the putting away of the filth of the fleſh, but the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God) by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Hence we conclude that now, children are taken into covenant with their parents, and they ought to anſwer a good conſcience in having of them baptized.

Anſ. That which ſav'd 'em was the ark that *Noah* built, which was a clear type of Chriſt: and as the old world was deſtroy'd when *Noah* enter'd into the ark; ſo ſhall the wicked when the Son of Man cometh for the ſalvation of his people, *Matt.* xxiv. 38, 39. But what is moſtly hinged upon, is *Noah*'s childrens going in, on their father's right. Tho' they were ſav'd only with a temporal ſalvation, which can't entitle to goſpel church-privileges. But what will you do with this here? the diſpute is commonly about *infant baptiſm*: but here is nothing like an infant, for they were all married men and women; *Noah* and his *wife*, and his *ſons* and their *wives*: and where is the perſon in our days that will baptize ſuch, only on their parents right? Thus by jumbling type and antitype together, perſons run themſelves into a ſad *dilemma*: whereas if we take them diſtinct, the caſe is eaſy. *Noah*, as well as the ark he built, did tipify Chriſt: his children were ſaved, ſo are all Chriſt's children: *Noah*'s children went voluntarily into the ark, at God's command, *Gen.* vii 1, 7; ſo muſt each one of us perſonally believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and anſwer a good conſcience towards God in obeying

his

his commands; or elſe *Noah*, *Daniel* nor *Job* can never deliver ſon nor daughter from deſtruction, *Ezek.* xiv. 20.

Object. 2. But the Lord made the covenant of grace with *Abraham*, and ſaid, *I will be a God to thee and to thy ſeed after thee*; and ſo took his ſeed into covenant with himſelf, which is called an *everlaſting covenant*; and as a token thereof, ordered him to circumciſe his children, *Gen.* xvii. So we believe that now children are in covenant with their parents, and ought to be baptized:—hence *Peter* ſays on the day of pentecoſt, to thoſe who were pricked to the heart, *Repent and be baptized,—for the promiſe is unto you, and your children.* Acts ii. 39.

Anſ. This is the main hinge on which all the controverſy turns; therefore I will be a little more particular upon it. And firſt let us obſerve that *Abraham* ſtood in a double capacity.—As he ſtood perſonally before God, the covenant of grace was no more made with him, than with any ſaint in the world. The goſpel was preached unto him, (*Gal.* iii. 8.) and he believed it, and it was counted unto him for righteouſneſs, *Rom.* iv. 3.—But as he ſtood a type of Chriſt, he appear'd as the viſible head of the *Jewiſh* Church, and the covenant was made with him, and his ſeed after him, and they were all taken into the church, and many favours were granted, or promiſed to them,—Nextly, let us examine who his *ſeed* are: and here I find that his ſeed is taken in three ſenſes in ſcripture.

1. His natural ſeed, which includes all that deſcended from his loins: Theſe were all taken into that typical covenant; and they had the privilege of the oracles of God, and the outward ordinances of his worſhip, which no other nation then enjoy'd: they had the promiſe of the land of *Canaan*, and of many outward bleſſings there; and in concluſion that Chriſt ſhould

come

come out of that nation ;—and they had the firſt proclamation of the goſpel *Rom.* iii. 1, 2, and 9, 4, 5.

2. Chriſt is *Abraham's* ſeed, *in whom all the families of the earth ſhall be bleſſed*, Gal. iii. 16. and ſundry of them ancient promiſes evidently point directly to him, in whom alone they are fulfilled.

3. All ſaints are *Abraham's* ſpiritual children.—*Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace ; to the end the promiſe might be ſure to all the ſeed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that alſo which is of the faith of* Abraham, *who is the father of us all*, Rom. iv. 16. Now as to theſe ſeed, God is indeed their God in covenant, which covenant and the bleſſings of it are everlaſting. But then take notice that, though all ſaints are *Abraham's children*, yet they are not all made *fathers* as he was. He is the father of us all ; and they that be of faith are his children. *Gal.* iii. 7. As he ſtood the head and father of that nation and church, he was as has been obſerved, a type of Chriſt who is our *everlaſting father.* (*Iſa.* ix. 6.) and is *head over all things to his church.* (Eph. i. 22.) In which ſenſe no meer man upon earth now ſtands as *Abraham* did.—Now if we take theſe things diſtinct, there is no difficulty ; but to jumble them together, leads into endleſs confuſion.—— Typically, all *Abraham's* poſterity were in covenant, both believers and unbelievers : and anti-typically all his ſpiritual ſeed are in the covenant of grace, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Rom. iv. 11, 12. And ſo that text is limited in *Act.* ii. 39. which is ſo much inſiſted upon. *The promiſe is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off*, EVEN AS MANY *as the Lord our God ſhall call.* There is the limits ; as many of us, and of our children as are effectually called, are *heirs of promiſe*, and no others *Heb.* vi. 17, 18. and ix. 15. And to cut this matter ſhort, we in general don't pretend to be *Abraham's* natural ſeed ; then ſhew me if you can, how

the

the natural ſeed of believing *Gentiles* as ſuch, ever become *Abraham*'s ſpiritual children : *that which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh* : and how came thoſe who are only your fleſhly poſterity, any way to be *Abraham*'s ſeed?—If you ſay that you are *Abraham*'s ſeed, and they ſtand to you, as his did to him.—Then let me enquire where God has ſhewn you that you ſhall be a father of many nations, and that a church ſhall ſpring from you which ſhall be large, and that *natural*, inſtead of *ſpiritual* birth ſhall bring perſons into it? Here lies the pinch of the point; a being born after the fleſh did bring them into the *Jewiſh* church, which is evident becauſe, if they were not circumciſed, they muſt be cut off from their people. (*Gen.* xvii. 14.) which could not be if they were not in; for there is no caſting any out of the church that are not in it. Which if it be the caſe now under the goſpel, then we have a fleſhly and not a ſpiritual church, directly contrary to many texts that I have mentioned, and ſcores more that might be bro't to the ſame purpoſe.

Here ſome bring *Rom.* xi. to prove that the limits of the church ſtand the ſame now as formerly, only is changed into different hands. Becauſe from a ſimilitude of the *olive-tree*, is repreſented the rejection of the *Jews*, and the reception of the *Gentiles*, to partake of that which is called the *root and fatneſs of the olive tree*; which they take to be a partaking of the ſame, or like, external, as well as internal privileges : from whence is argued the right of profeſſors now to baptize their children, becauſe the *Jews* circumciſed theirs.—But by the root and olive-tree, I underſtand, *Abraham* typically, and Chriſt ſpiritually, who is plainly pointed at in ver. 26, 27. He *is the vine*, his people *are the branches*. (Joh. xv. 5.) The *Jews* were broken off thro' unbelief, and the *Gentiles* were graffed in, and ſtand only by *faith*, ver. 20. So that what appears from hence is, that true faith is abſolutely neceſſary, in order for any ſoul now

to partake of theſe great bleſſings, deſcribed by the root and fatneſs of the olive; which bleſſings the *Jews* loſt by unbelief, tho' it is called *their own olive-tree*, ver. 24. and they had the firſt offer of grace when Chriſt came.—

Therefore whatever privileges are intended by the root and fatneſs of the olive, it is evident that as the branch muſt have a living union to the tree, or vine, in order to receive nouriſhment therefrom; ſo every perſon, both great and ſmall, muſt by faith be united to Chriſt, in order to partake of them favours: which ſhews, that no arguments can be drawn from hence to prove that any others are ſubjects of baptiſm but real ſaints.

Object. 3. But it is evident that in old time, God did grant to the children of thoſe who were eminently godly, many favours and privileges that he did not to others: and ſo the prophet ſpeaking concerning the laſt times, tells the ſaints that they ſhall be *the ſeed of the bleſſed of the Lord, and their offspring with them*, Iſa. lxv. 23. and there is much more in ſcripture to the ſame purpoſe; from whence we cannot but think, that children now are taken into covenant with their parents, and therefore have a right to baptiſm.

Anſ. The firſt part of this objection is undoubted truth, but the conſequence drawn from it, I think has no foundation in ſcripture: for a great part of the favours thus granted, are only of a temporal nature; and that not only to children, but alſo to other friends round. Thus for inſtance, not only *Noah*'s and *Lot*'s children were ſaved from being drowned and burnt up: but *Rahab* the harlot's father and mother, brothers and ſiſters, alſo were preſerved from being ſlain, for her ſake, becauſe ſhe received the ſpies with peace. *Joſh.* ii. 13. and 6. 23, 24.—And how often does God ſpeak of preſerving the kingdom, and the privileges of it, in the hands of the poſterity of *David* his ſervant,

ſervant, for their fathers ſake. 1 *Kings* 11. 13, 32, 34, 36. 2 *Chron.* 21. 7. *Iſa.* 37. 35. So that it appears that a great part of the favours thus given, are of a temporal nature, which no ways entitles to goſpel church privileges :—If it did, parents or brethren of the godly might claim a right to them, as well as children. Yet.

2. If any ſpiritual favours are ſhewn to children for their parents ſake, they are either the advantage of their godly examples, counſels and inſtructions, and the enjoyment of the outward means of grace, (*chiefly because unto them are committed the oracles of God.* Rom. iii.—) Or elſe out of regard to his ſaints, and in anſwer to their prayers, the Lord is pleas'd to power out his ſpirit on them, and ſavingly turn 'em to himſelf : then we readily own that they have a right to all the privileges of the ſons of God.—*I will pour out my ſpirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine off-ſpring* :—What then is the conſequence ? why; *one ſhall ſay, I am the Lord's : and another ſhall call himſelf by the name of* Jacob : *and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand unto the Lord, and ſir-name himſelf by the name of* Iſrael. *Iſai.* xliv. 3, 5. Note, firſt God's ſpirit is pour'd upon 'em, and then they openly confeſs him. But what proof is there from hence, that unconverted children have a right to church privileges? The Lord in comforting Zion, in Iſa. liv. 13. ſays, *All thy children ſhall be taught of God* : which chapter the apoſtle quotes in our context, to deſcribe the free-woman ; and then adds, *We, brethren are her children* : all which ſhews, that the churches children in a goſpel ſenſe, are only real ſaints. The ſame appears alſo from what God ſaid to *Jeremiah*, concerning the new covenant, that he would make with his people : not according to the covenant that he made with *Iſrael*, when they came out of *Egypt* ; which new covenant, is a writing his law in their hearts, &c. and in deſcribing the extent of it, he ſays, *They ſhall all know*

know me, from the leaſt of them, unto the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity; and I will remember their ſin no more. From which it is evident to a demonſtration, that none are actually in the covenant, but ſuch as know God, and have their ſins forgiven. This is applied to the goſpel-ſtate in *Heb.* viii.

Further let it be obſerved, that this point, of favours being ſhewn to children for their godly parents ſake, was no ways confined to circumciſion of old, becauſe, it appears before, in the time, and after that was inſtituted.—*Before*, it appeared in *Noah*'s family, as obſerved above.—*In the time* of it, we may ſee the ſame in *Lot*'s houſe, and that not only to his immediate offspring, but alſo many generations after, God ſhews ſome regard to his poſterity for his ſake, *Deut.* ii. 9, 19. Yet none of them were circumciſed.—And *after* circumciſion was inſtituted in *Iſrael*, the ſame appears without any ſpecial reference to that, as may be ſeen in the family of *Phinehas*, *David*, and others, though all the reſt of *Iſrael* were circumciſed as well as they: which proves that God's beſtowing ſome favours on ſaints children, that he didn't to others of old, never could argue any right to circumciſion, without an expreſs command: then ſurely no proof can from hence be drawn for baptizing believers ſeed now, without the plain direction of the lawgiver.

Object. 4. According to this, you make as tho' ſaints in goſpel-times have not ſo great privileges as they had under the law: but we believe them to be greater now than then.

Anſ. 1. In order to ſolve this difficulty, 'tis neceſſary to conſider what were truly the privileges that they enjoy'd under the law. And *Paul* plainly ſhews that their chief privileges were the enjoyment of the oracles of God, *Rom.* iii. 1, 2. which were as means for their converſion and ſalvation: and that they might not partake

of

of these means without being circumcised is manifest, because that Christ himself when he sent out his apostles before he had by his death abolished the *Jewish* ceremonies, forbid their preaching to the *Gentiles* or *Samaritans*, but only to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*, Matt. x. 5, 6. But now our children may enjoy these means with vastly greater clearness than they, without being baptized.——

Should any here say that Baptism is a means for conversion, and as such ought to be used for children. I reply, that I conceive this was the footing upon which the baptizing of infants was first introduced into the world: tho' I don't pretend to be much acquainted with the history of those times, yet I gather this from the account that *Pædobaptists* themselves give of this affair. Mr. *Clark* in his late defence of the divine right of Infant-Baptism; though he can produce no express mention of infants being baptized in the two first hundred years after Christ; yet he would persuade us that the fathers of the third century had the apostles minds and practice right in this matter, who plainly mention it. But one of the first passages that he cites is from St. *Origen* in these expressions, *viz.* "It is for that reason "because by the sacrament of Baptism the *pollution of* "*our birth is taken away*, that infants are baptized." P. 111. And hence they frequently called Baptism, *regeneration*: which language the church of *England* retain to this day. But if all were regenerated who are sprinkled in infancy, surely we should see other men of them, than multitudes of them appear to be. And the notion of the pollution of our births being washed away by this outward application of water, looks so absurd, that I would perswade myself that 'tis needless among us to stand to confute it.—Were it needful, what the noted Mr. *Joseph Allen* (a *Pædobaptist*) in his alarm to the unconverted, P. 10. lays down, is somewhat to the purpose.

poſe. Says he, "It is not the end of Baptiſm to rege-
" nerate, 1. Becauſe then there would be no reaſon why
" it ſhould be confined only to the ſeed of believers, for
" both the law of God, and the nature of charity re-
" quires us to uſe the means of converſion for all, as far
" as we can have opportunity. Were this true, no ſuch
" charity as to catch the children of the *Turks* and *Hea-*
" *thens*, and baptize them, and diſpatch them to hea-
" ven out of hand, like the bloody wretches that made
" the poor proteſtants (to ſave their lives) ſwear they
" would come to *Maſs*, and that they would never de-
" part from it, and then put them forthwith to death,
" ſaying, *They would hang them while in a good mind.*
" 2. Becauſe it pre-ſuppoſeth regeneration, and there-
" fore can't be intended to confer it. In all the ex-
" preſs inſtances in ſcripture, we find that Baptiſm doth
" ſuppoſe their repenting, believing receiving the Holy
" Ghoſt, *Act.* viii. 37. & ii. 38. & x. 37. *Mark* xvi. 16."

I alſo obſerve in Mr. *Clark* that there is as early mention of *Godfathers*, and *Godmothers* as there is of infants right to Baptiſm. P. 105. He likewiſe ſpeaks of a diſpute that after roſe among the churches whether infants might be baptized as ſoon as they were born, or not till eight days old: which affair was ſettled by a council in *Cyprian*'s time. All which make me think that inſtead of having this pattern from the apoſtles, theſe things were introduced gradually among many other corruptions of thoſe times.

Anſw. 2. If you think we muſt have as many external ordinances of worſhip as they of old, or elſe that our privileges are leſs, you are greatly miſtaken, for 'tis juſtly reckoned a great favour to have that large *hand-writing of ordinances taken out of the way.* Col. ii. 14. The *Jews* had three ſtated *feaſts* in which all their Males were to appear before God. (*Deut.* xvi. 16.) But there is but one ſtated ordinance in the goſpel-

church

church which is ſo called. 1 *Cor.* v. 8. and who will ſay that our privileges are leſs than the *Jews* becauſe of that? Much of the glory of that church was outward (as of circumciſion the Lord ſays, *My covenant ſhall be in your fleſh.* Gen. xvii. 13.) and they had a great deal of outward ſplendor:—in particular their temple built by *Solomon*, doubtleſs far ſurpaſſed any houſe that any goſpel-church now on earth have to meet in: yet that don't prove our privileges to be leſs than theirs.

Anſ. 3. *Aaron* was choſen God's high-prieſt of old, and then the prieſthood was limitted to his natural ſeed; and the Lord ſays of his grandſon *Phinehas*, *Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace: and he ſhall have it, and his ſeed after him, even the covenant of an everlaſting prieſthood; becauſe he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Iſrael.* Num. xxv 12, 13. Now mark—here is an *everlaſting covenant*, made with *Phinehas*, as well as with *Abraham*; but who will ſay, that goſpel miniſters privileges are leſs now, than thoſe miniſters of God's ſanctuary were then; unleſs the miniſtry may now be limited to their natural poſterity? A part of the prieſts work was to *teach Jacob God's Judgments, and Iſrael his law.* (Deut. xxxiii. 10.) which is the work of goſpel-miniſters now. Natural birth, and ſome outward ceremonies then bro't perſons into the church, and into the prieſthood: but now ſpiritual birth, and the work of God's grace is neceſſary, in order to bring ſouls aright, into the church and into the miniſtry. As to both, it then ran in a *natural*, but now in a *ſpiritual* line: and there is every whit as much reaſon to plead that miniſters in theſe times, muſt have all their off-ſpring maintained by the offerings of the people; and that none may come into the miniſtry, but their ſeed; (*Deut.* xviii. 1—5.) or elſe their privileges are cut ſhort; as to ſay, that church-members now muſt have

have all their children baptized, to prevent a complaint of their privileges being abridg'd.

What has been ſaid may be ſufficient to anſwer that objection that is often urged, *viz.* That children were once in covenant, and where were they cut off ? For they were only in a typical covenant, as has been ſhewn : But when *John* the baptiſt came to prepare the way for the evangelical adminiſtration, he told the *Jews* to think no more about having *Abraham* to their father ; for God was able of ſtones to raiſe up children unto *Abraham*. q.d. *Abraham*'s children are now to be reckoned in another line ; therefore think no more of having a right to ordinances, only by virtue of natural generation. And he plainly ſhews that evidences of repentance are neceſſary now in order for any to partake of baptiſm ; *Matt.* 3. 8, 9. So that unconverted children were only in that old covenant, which was then *ready to vaniſh away* (Heb. 8. 13.) None are in the new-covenant, 'till God's law is writen in their hearts (ver. 10.) and ſuch never can be cut off.

Neither will there need much more to be ſaid upon the diſtinction that is made between the external adminiſtration and internal efficacy of the covenant. This Mr. *Clark* inſiſts much upon * : And he owns that none are

* In his anſwer to Dr. *Gill*, on infant baptiſm ; I will recite ſome of his words, p. 246. He ſays, " A man may be in the covenant of " grace, in reſpect of its viſible adminiſtration—and yet he may not " be in the covenant of grace in regard of it's ſpiritual diſpenſation " and efficacy. This is the caſe of all *cloſe* hypocrites, p. 248. The " inviſible church conſiſts of all, and only real Saints.—all the mem- " bers of this inviſible church, it will be granted, are in the cove- " nant of grace, in regard of its ſpiritual efficacy." And further on he declares, that " Chriſt hath promiſed ſalvation to thoſe *only* " who believe in their hearts, as well as confeſs with their mouths, " p. 249." And now what place has Mr. *Clark* got in the church to put children in, before they believe ? I confeſs I can ſee none but only along with hypocrites, to whom he acknowledges Chriſt has *not promiſed* ſalvation, but to thoſe *only* who believe in their hearts : and if it be a very great privilege to be in ſuch a place, then he may have ſome colour for complaining of our cutting children off from ſome valuable privilege, by not baptizing of them before they are converted.

are in the covenant in the latter ſenſe, but real ſaints; but their children were in the former external adminiſtration, and ſo he thinks they are now. But if the former adminiſtration was *typical*, and the latter *ſpiritual*, as has been ſufficiently ſhewn; and if he is not now a *Jew*, which is one *outwardly*;—but that he only is a *Jew* which is one *inwardly*; and if now circumciſion is that of the *heart*, in the *ſpirit*, and not in the *letter*, whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God, *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. then ſurely there is no more place here for children, than any others, till their hearts are chang'd.

And a few words may alſo ſuffice to confute the argument that is fram'd from the ſimilitude of a king's giving out a patent, or grant of land, and certain privileges, to a number of perſons, and their heirs, ſealed with red wax; and afterwards ſhould call it in, and put a new ſeal, in white wax to the ſame patent: that in ſuch a caſe there would be no need of expreſſing anew, who were intereſted in it. From whence is argued that 'tis the ſame covenant and grant that believers have now, which was given to *Abraham*, only that was ſeal'd with a red or bloody ſeal, and this with a white one *. But, (to uſe this way of ſpeaking) the difference appears vaſtly great, for the old patent to *Abraham* contained a promiſe of a numerous offſpring, that he ſhould be a father of many nations, and kings ſhould come out of his loins, that they ſhould be God's viſible covenant people, and they ſhould have the land of *Canaan* for an everlaſting poſſeſſion, (*Gen.* xvii. 2—8. The head and capital of which country was *Jeruſalem*.——Whereas the new patent is given to Jeſus Chriſt the antetype of *Abraham*, which is juſtly called *a better covenant, eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes*, Heb. viii. 6. He has the promiſe of the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth

* Vide Mr. *Dickinſon*'s dialogue on infant-baptiſm.

earth for his poſſeſſion; and all that can claim a right to the bleſſings of this teſtament, are ſuch as are effectually *called:* ſuch have the promiſe of a better land than the old *Canaan* ever was, even an *eternal inheritance*, Heb. ix. 15. The old patent promiſed that *ſome* of *Abraham*'s poſterity ſhould be made *kings*; but this new one makes *all* Chriſt's ſeed *kings*, as well as *prieſts* to God; who ſhall reign, not for a few years only, but for ever and ever, *Rev.* i. 6. and xxii. 25. The royal ſeat of them old kings, was Jeruſalem below; which in *Paul*'s time was in *bondage with her children:* but theſe kings ſhall reign in *Jeruſalem* that is above, and is *free, which is the mother of us all.*— They of old were God's covenant people for a while, yet afterwards for their breaking his covenant, he ſays, he *regarded them not*, (Heb. viii. 9. But thoſe that are in this new covenant, *There is nothing preſent nor to come, that ſhall ever ſeparate them from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, Rom. viii.— And as the articles in theſe two teſtaments are very different one from the other; ſo, ſhould we ſuppoſe (but not grant) theſe external ordinances to be *ſeals*, yet there is a great difference between them alſo. For,

1. Circumciſion was only for the males; baptiſm is both for males and females.

2. Circumciſion might be adminiſtered by common perſons: *Moſes*'s wife circumciſed his ſon, (*Exod.* iv. 25.) and *Zechariah*'s neighbours came to circumciſe *John*, *Luke* i. 58, 59.—But Baptiſm is to be adminiſtred only by Chriſt's meſſengers, *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20.

3. Circumciſion was not to be adminiſtred 'till eight days old; but baptiſm has no other age fixed than only, if they believe with all the heart, they may be baptized, *Acts* viii. 37.

4. Circumciſion bound them to obſerve all thoſe legal ceremonies, which baptiſm, does not, *Gal.* 5.—

5. Circum-

5. Circumcision was a type of what should come, even of Christ's being cut off, and also of regeneration; *Col.* ii. 11. Whereas baptism is not a type of what is to come; but is an outward sign or manifestation of what is inwardly wrought. *As many as are baptized into Christ* HAVE *put on Christ*, Gal. 3. 27.—Here lies one special difference between the ordinances of the old testament, and the new. Old testament ordinances were typical of what was to come: whereas the ordinances of the new, are open declarations of what is actually done. Thus for instance, in the Lord's supper, we do *shew forth the Lord's Death*: or from time to time, hold up a publick witness to the world that Christ has really died for sinners; and this we are to continue in the practice of, till his second coming, 1 *Cor.* xi. 26.

Hence we may see the reason, why those might be the subjects of circumcision, that may not of baptism, *viz.* because that pointed forward to what was to be, and so might be administred to subjects who had not the thing typified, wrought in their hearts: but baptism is not a type that the subjects shall be converted; but an open sign or witness that they are so; and thus the worthy subject in attending that ordinance declares, that he has been *crucified with Christ, and is made dead unto sin and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi.—

This view I conceive may give us a true idea of that text which is considerably used in this affair, *Rom.* iv. 11. *And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith.*—From whence many conclude, that the covenant of circumcision was the pure covenant of grace: and that circumcision then, and baptism now are seals thereof. But you may observe, that what the apostle is upon, is proving that great point of our justification by faith alone; and he brings

brings in the inſtance of *Abraham* as an evidence in the caſe, and ſhews that he was juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Upon this there ariſes another queſtion, which is, Whether this great bleſſing comes only on the circumciſion, or on others alſo? to decide which he takes a review of *Abraham*'s caſe; from whence it appears that *Abraham* himſelf was juſtified by faith, long before circumciſion was inſtituted. *And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumciſed.*——

Circumciſion (as has been ſhewn) was a ſign of what was to come; but *Abraham* had the thing ſignified then wrought in his ſoul; ſo that he had both the type and antetype, and thus it was to him a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he then had. But how could it be a ſeal to *Iſhmael*, and thouſands of others of the righteouſneſs of the faith which they had not?—The apoſtle from hence goes on to ſhew that thus ſtanding, *Abraham* was a father to all that believ'd, tho' not circumciſed: and a father to thoſe of the *Jews* that were not only circumciſed, but alſo walked in the ſame faith that he had before he was circumciſed; which brings out juſt the ſame thing, that has been obſerved before, *viz.* that typically he was father of all that church, both believers and unbelievers, and ſpiritually he is the father of all the ſaints, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And without this diſtinction it ſeems impoſſible to reconcile many paſſages of ſcripture together.

Before I diſmiſs this point, I would ſhew ſomething of the abſurdities and entanglements which follow, upon holding, that all the ſaints natural ſeed now are in covenant with them, according to *Abraham*'s covenant. This leaves men at a loſs how large the church is; and who have a right to its ordinances. Some hold,

hold, that church members ſhould baptize both their children and their ſervants; only it muſt be ſuch as are young: yet then they can never tell exactly what age to fix.—Numbers there are, who inſiſt upon all baptized children's coming to the Lord's Supper at ſixteen years old, if not openly ſcandalous: but moſt of the firſt Settlers of *New-England*, would receive none to the Supper, but ſuch as they counted godly, and would baptize no children, but only where one of the parents were church-members: yet when theſe children were grown up, they began to plead that they were in covenant, and therefore muſt have their children baptized; or elſe they would be like heathens: and ſo by degrees they got into the practice of admitting ſuch to own the covenant (as 'tis call'd) and have their children baptized, who did not think themſelves fit to come to the Lord's Supper: which ſeems to bring in a ſort of *Purgatory*, or half way between the church and the world. This has been renounced by many in the preſent day, who ſtill hold to infant-baptiſm: tho' other godly and learned men when they have owned ſome ſcruple in the caſe, yet have ſaid, "What ſhall we do? they are in the covenant who have been baptized, and how can we deny them the privileges?"—Others ſay that though children baptized, have not a right to the ſupper, nor to bring their ſeed to baptiſm, till converted; yet they are under the watch and care of the church, and if they are found obſtinate tranſgreſſors, they muſt be diſciplin'd and caſt out. But we are commanded in any wiſe to rebuke our neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him; and to reprove even the unfruitful works of darkneſs, and would you caſt them out from this? that is a great length indeed.

Now all theſe profeſs to hold to *Abraham*'s covenant, and that they will ſhew themſelves to be his children by

by doing his works ; and yet there is not one of them all, that come up to what they profeſs : for *Abraham* circumciſed himſelf, his ſon & all the MEN of his houſe ; of which were 318 trained ſoldiers, *Gen.* xvii. 23. and xiv. 14. But theſe ſeveral ſorts of perſons diſcover ſomething in the new-teſtament that contradicts ſo large a practice as that,—therefore they take a part of it ; ſome a greater part, and others leſs, according as it appears cleareſt to them.—The chief reaſon of all this confuſion, I conceive to be men's jumbling the conſtitution of the old teſtament church, and the new together : whereas if we take them diſtinct, the limits of each are expreſt very plain. The limits of the old church are expreſt as plain by *Moſes*, as they were to *Abraham*.—If any man would join with that church and come to the paſſover, he muſt have all his males circumciſed : and every man's ſervant, bought with money, when he was circumciſed, then ſhould he eat the paſſover. A foreigner and an hired ſervant might not eat thereof : but all the congregation of *Iſrael* ſhould keep it, *Exod.* xii. 44,—48. There are the bounds ſet exactly ; and as plain are they in the new-teſtament. He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.—They that gladly received the word were baptized ; and the ſame day were added to the church : and they continued in her fellowſhip.—And the Lord added to the church daily, ſuch as ſhould be ſaved, *Mark* xvi. 16. *Acts* ii. 41,—47.—All who by *birth* or *purchaſe* were incorporated into an *Hebrew*'s family, had a right to all the ordinances of that church :—So all that by Chriſt's *purchaſe* and the *new-birth*, are brought into the *houſhold of God*, have a right to all the privileges of the goſpel church, *Eph.* ii. 19,—22. And to vary a ſtep from this, leads men into a jumble ; and rather than yield the caſe, they will ſay, that the ſcriptures have left this matter in the dark, about

the

the ſubjects of baptiſm: when in truth all the darkneſs is in their own minds.

Let none improve any of theſe things, to leſſen their obligations of diſcharging their duty faithfully towards their children's ſouls as well as bodies. I believe that thoſe to whom God hath given children, ought to give them up to him again, acknowledging their obligations to bring them up in his ways; and let us bring them to Chriſt for his bleſſing as they did of old. But ſome ſay, "How can we bring them to him, but in the way "of his ordinances? we know not how to bring them "to him but by baptizing of them, as the ſeal of our "faith."

Anſw. Sick perſons were then frequently brought to Chriſt as well as children: and can't you find a way now to bring your ſick to Chriſt either publickly or privately without baptizing of them? ſurely you can — And ſince there is no more hint of baptiſm in one caſe, than the other, I think you may raiſe as good an argument from hence, for having baptiſm adminiſtred as a ſeal of your faith in bringing your *ſick* to Chriſt, as your *children*. If it be urged that Chriſt ſays, *Of ſuch is the kingdom of God*. I reply, that he does not ſay *all* ſuch, but *of* ſuch is the kingdom of God: and he immediately adds (both in *Mark* x. 15. and *Luk.* xviii. 17.) an aſſertion that, *Whoſoever ſhall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he ſhall not enter therein.* Which ſeems to relate rather to the *tempers*, than to the *perſons* of little children. But let all who have an intereſt at the throne of grace, improve it for their children as well as others: and alſo uſe all their endeavours with them to bring them to know God, through Jeſus Chriſt: and when once there appears evidence of their being in ſuch a happy condition, then let them be as ſmall as they will, it is readily granted that they have a right to all the privileges of the ſons of God.

USE III. What has been ſaid may lead us to an examination of our condition. Since all the world is divided into two families, as Chriſt ſays, *He that is not for us, is againſt us*; ſo here, all are children either of the bondwoman, or the free. Then ſurely 'tis of infinite importance for each ſoul to know which mother they belong to: and the ſcriptures have given many plain marks whereby we may come to know how our caſe is.—For brevity's ſake I ſhall inſtance in but one, which is that, *If thou art a child of the free woman, it is become thy* LIBERTY *to walk in holineſs.* Herein lies a ſpecial difference between the leaſt chriſtian and the greateſt hypocrite in the world. Both of them pay ſome regard to the ſame commands, and in many things their external walk may appear alike: but then the ſprings and motives of their obedience are vaſtly different. The hypocrite ſometimes does things to be ſeen of men, tho' what moſt commonly moves him, is fear of hell if he neglects duty, and hopes of eſcaping it by his performances. Hence you'll often hear them pleading, that 'tis dangerous for perſons to be too confident; and that 'tis needful always to have ſome fear of miſcarrying at laſt, leſt we ſhould grow remiſs and careleſs in duty; and ſome will plainly ſay, that if the doctrine which many hold concerning perſeverance and aſſurance is true, and if they knew that they were in Chriſt, and ſhould never periſh, they would not care how they lived, for all would end well at laſt. But how plainly do theſe men diſcover themſelves to be children of the bondwoman, for they look no further than their wages, or to eſcape the whip? We all know that the greater confirmation an obedient child has of his father's love, and the ſecurity of his favour, the more chearful, active and diligent he will be in doing his father's will, and careful not to do any thing to offend him.

him. And since it is so often asserted, that saints love and delight in God's law, how can any rational soul, (if they would let reason, instead of their own experience decide the case) imagine that clear discoveries of God's love and favour, would make men less careful to serve him?—Don't we all know that what men love and delight in, they will seek and pursue after, without being drove? as for instance, food that we love, we labour for earnestly, and eat of it frequently, without being told that we shall die if we don't. And *Job* says, that he *esteemed the words of God's mouth more than his necessary food*, chap. xxiii. 12. and *David* counted the divine law, to be *sweeter than the honey-comb*. Psal. xix. 10. Also, *persons* that we love;—without driving, we seek all opportunities to enjoy their company. So will all those that truly love God, and his saints,—yea such as love the riches, honours, or pleasures of this world, not only voluntarily run after them, but they also earnestly crave a great deal of them: and so do those who love Christ and holiness; and they that are content with a little degree of grace, never knew the glory and excellency of divine things. *David* says, *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*, Psal. xvii. 15. Nothing short of this can fill the desires of a gracious soul. The first epistle of *John* is peculiarly calculated to detect licentious hypocrites, and to press home a holy life upon all professors of religion: and observe well the beloved disciples method.—*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.*—But what if they should happen to be ensnared in sin? does he then set the terrors of hell before them? No, he presents the grace and blessings of heaven;—*If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the father*;—and *if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*,

chap. i. 9. and ii. 1. And farther to attain this glorious end, he ſets ſaints to admiring the wondrous love of God in taking them to be his children, and aſſerts that now they are the ſons of God, but what they ſhall be advanced to, does not yet appear; but ſays he, *We* KNOW *that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* There is the ſtrongeſt aſſurance expreſt; but will that make them ſlack in their obedience? No, quite the contrary, for *every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*;—and he declares, that he that can run on in ſin, *Hath not ſeen* Chriſt, *neither known him*, chap. iii. 1, 2, 3, 6. And now, are not hypocrites aſhamed of their notion that aſſurance is a licentious doctrine?—O my readers, I intreat and charge you before God, who ſhall judge us all, to ſearch critically your own hearts, and ſee whether you are governed by a ſpirit of bondage, and ſlaviſh fear, or by the ſpirit of adoption, whereby you can cry *Abba Father*, Rom. viii. 15.—

I ſhall only anſwer a ſcruple that may ariſe here in ſome gracious ſouls, and then diſmiſs this head.—Methinks I hear ſome ſuch ſay, "Alas, I fear that I am "a child of the bond-woman, for I often drag on "heavily in duty, and I feel my heart ſo dull and back-"ward to ſpiritual exerciſes, that I can't think there "is any grace in it." But this ſhort queſtion may eaſily decide the caſe, viz. Is it the divine commands which are burdenſome to thee, or thy vile heart that often hinders thee from doing the things that thou wouldeſt?—God's ſervice is a *wearineſs* to hypocrites, *Amos* viii. 5. *Mal.* i. 13. But ſaints delight in his law after the inward man, though they find a law in their members warring againſt it, *Rom.* vii. 21, 22, 23.—Carefully obſerve this diſtinction, and you may come to know what your condition is.

I ſhall

I ſhall cloſe with a ſhort addreſs to two or three ſorts of perſons. And,

Firſt, to thoſe that hold the contrary from me concerning the ſubjects of baptiſm, many of whom are very near to me. *My dear friends*, it may be ſome of you will be offended, and others grieved with me, when you ſee the foregoing lines. But I think I can truly ſay, that 'tis not out of bitterneſs, but rather out of love to you, that I have pen'd what you here ſee, Therefore I would only beg this one favour of you, namely, that you would candidly weigh what is here ſaid, in the balances of the ſanctuary, before you cenſure or caſt it by: and in order for this, let the characters of all that have held the one ſide or the other of this principle be put intirely out of the queſtion, or you'll never come to the right of the caſe. That there have been good Men of both ſentiments is no ſcruple to me, and I believe not to you neither; and 'tis as evident that there have been bad men on both ſides: and ſhould you try to find out which had the greateſt number, it would be little to the purpoſe.— The miſchiefs that I have found by experience in theſe things make me caution you againſt them. *David* was a man of a much better character than *Joab*; yet *Joab* had the right of the caſe concerning numbering the people, 1 *Chron.* xxi.—Therefore let us all obey the divine command to *ceaſe from man*, viewing that all fleſh is but fading graſs: and be willing that this matter ſhould be decided alone by *the word of our God that ſhall ſtand for ever*, (Iſa. ii. 22. and xl. 8.) And if after a diligent ſearching of the ſcriptures, you ſtill remain of a different mind from me; yet ſtill remember that to his own maſter each ſoul ſtands or falls, and ſo forbear all bitter cenſures. And O that each one would with greater earneſtneſs *forget the things that are behind, and preſs towards the glorious*

mark; believing that wherein we are differently minded, God ſhall in his own time reveal the whole truth unto us, *Phil.* iii. 14, 15. Oh, when ſhall that bleſſed day come, when ſaints will have done with all miſunderſtandings of each other; when they ſhall all join with one heart and ſoul to praiſe our glorious King for ever and ever.

Secondly, I ſhall ſay a word to ſuch as are of my ſentiments concerning baptiſm.—Brethren, what I have to ſpeak to you is, *Live up to your principles.*—How inexcuſable will thoſe appear, who inſiſt upon it that perſons muſt believe in order to be baptized; and yet admit ſuch to this ordinance who give no proper evidence of any thing more than an hiſtorical or doctrinal faith? whereas a believing with *all the heart* is neceſſary to give a right thereto, *Act.* viii. 37. And though God alone can ſearch the heart; yet *fruits* of *Repentance* ſhould be carefully looked after in this caſe.—And as little excuſe can be found for them, that while they plead that we muſt be *buried with Chriſt in Baptiſm*, yet behave as though ſin lived and reigned in their hearts ſtill, inſtead of being *dead indeed unto ſin but alive unto God thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, Rom. vi. 4, 11. Therefore let none while they profeſs to know God, deny him in works; but be exhorted ſo to walk as to *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*—This would have a much greater tendency to bring others to imbrace the truth in theſe things, than many warm diſputes without a good life. 'Tis not eaſy to imagine how much uſe is made of the corrupt lives of numbers of thoſe in the land who are called *Baptiſts*, to bar the minds of thouſands againſt *receiving*, or even candidly *weighing* and *examining* what I firmly believe are truths which they hold. And tho' I am not excuſing ſuch conduct; yet I would earneſtly perſwade you all as much as may be to *cut off occaſion*

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from thoſe that deſire occaſion thus to treat the truth and them that hold it. And if others ſay that we diſregard, and are cruel to our children, becauſe we don't baptize them before they are converted: let each head of a family, walk in his houſe with a perfect heart, and behave ſo towards the little ones that God has given him, as to evidence that he has a much greater regard for the ſpiritual, than the temporal welfare of his children.

Laſtly, I will cloſe with a word to all the children of the bond-woman, *My dear fellow Men*, be intreated to conſider how ſad your caſe and condition is. If you flouriſh in the world more than the ſaints, and are left alone to live as you liſt: this is but a miſerable portion, which preſently will be all ſtript from you, and God will ſay, *How much they have glorified themſelves, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give them*, Jam. 5.— Rev. 18. 7.——Many of you are ready to think, that there is too much ado made about religion, and can laugh at the devotions of the godly. But Oh! remember and take warning by your old father *Iſhmael*: he made a *mock* of his fathers joy, in ſeeing the accompliſhment of God's promiſe; which is here (ver. 29.) call'd *perſecution*, for which he was *caſt out* from the bleſſings which he had deſpiſed. *Now therefore be ye not mockers leſt your bands be made ſtrong*, (Iſa. 28. 22.) but fly to Chriſt, that your ſouls may live.—And are there any of you who are ſeeking help by the life of your own Hands; how does Chriſt expoſtulate with you (*Iſa.* 55. 2, 3.) ſaying, *Wherefore do ye ſpend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight itſelf in fatneſs. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your ſouls ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David. AMEN.

AN
APPENDIX,

Containing an Anſwer to a late Piece, intitled, "A "Letter treating upon the Subject and Mode of "*Baptiſm*; wrote to a Friend:" By Mr. *Ebenezer Frothingham*, Paſtor of a Church of Chriſt in *Middletown, Connecticut.*

I

I Suppoſe all conſiderate perſons will allow, that in ſearching after truth, it is very neceſſary to avoid having our paſſions inflamed, or our minds biaſed, before the queſtion is truly ſtated, and the arguments on each ſide fairly examined; yet how commonly is the contrary method taken by the advocates for *infant-baptiſm?* Of which Mr. *F*—'s preface is a notable ſpecimen.

1. He tells the reader of, "Great diviſions that have "roſe in this day of reformation about baptiſm, thro' "which means the cauſe of Chriſt has been greatly "wounded."—P. 3. Now it is certain that Chriſt and his Truth have occaſioned diviſions in all ages, though all the blame belongs to thoſe who are oppoſite thereto; therefore our principles muſt firſt be proved not to be true, before they can juſtly be charged as the blamable cauſe of diviſion.

2. He begs the very point in debate, and then charges us with the horrid crime of ſacrilege; for, refer-

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ing to Prov. 20. 25. he says, "Water separated to a "sacred use, and used in the name of the Father, Son, "and Holy Ghost, in baptizing an infant or adult per- "son, is God's ordinance and is holy—and those "that reject it *devour that which is holy.*"—P. 4, 5. Whereas the very question between us is, Whether water applied to an infant in the sacred name is GOD's ordinance or not? And for him to say it is, without proof, is a plain begging of the question; and if we may take his word for it, is a shrewd token that he has fallen on the wrong side: For in another case he says, "Mr. *Bartlet* has made a sad mistake, which is "common for all persons to do, that are so unhappy "as to fall on the wrong side of the question. He "has beg'd the whole matter in debate." * Yet,

3. As if this was not enough to prejudice the reader's mind, he says, "Search through the land, in this "day of reformation, and you may find that all those "that have run into those wild antinomian schemes, "that put away their lawful wives and husbands, and "took others possessed with unclean spirits of devils, "who were dreadful blasphemers also: All these re- "jected infant-baptism as a limb of antichrist, and "most of them have been rebaptized by dipping. Not "a mortal who holds to infant-baptism, who seriously "and solemnly practises therein, has been left of God "to any of these awful delusions that I have ever heard "of."—P. 5. Thus he would persuade the reader that good is intailed, to infant-baptism, and evil to its opponants; but this is so far from truth, that the most awful delusion of that nature that I have known in our day, was in a member of the church in *Canterbury*; who after he had declared a revelation for another woman, for which the church justly excommunicated

* Mr. *Frothingham's* late *Key* to the constitution in *Connecticut*, Pag. 13.

municated him, procured poiſon to diſpatch his wife out of the world, in order to accompliſh his horrid prediction: Yet I never heard him called a *baptiſt* in all my life. And though a letter from *Middletown* informs me, that Mr. *F.* has named *Dowglas* and *Abbe*, in his ſermons, as beginning their antinomianiſm with denying infant-baptiſm; yet I can truly declare, that I was called to preach to a ſociety in *Windham*, in *April* 1747, ſoon after they broached their deluſions there, and I preached there frequently till the next *September*, had converſe with theſe men, and was ſometimes interrupted in my preaching by them; yet I can't recollect that I ever heard them ſay one word againſt infant-baptiſm; and I cannot learn by my brethren in the next town, that they have ever heard them called *baptiſts* to this day.

I am not willing to charge him with known falſhood in this affair; and rather think that as there have been a number who were called baptiſts in our day, who have gone into the deluſions he ſpeaks of, therefore he has been carried away with the cuſtom which has been followed theſe two hundred years, to impute all that is evil to the baptiſts. But when will men have done with thinking it will do to *talk wickedly for God!*

4. Having repreſented our way in ſuch a horrid light, Mr. *F.* proceeds to tell the reader of a number, who have been convinced of its being an error, and have returned to the practice of infant-baptiſm, of which he was one; and ſays he went ſo far, that if he had met with a baptiſt elder, he ſhould have been re-baptized. And while he would repreſent that we act upon ſcruples and negatives, he ſays, "I was bro't "to ſee, inaſmuch as I *was* baptized, it was neceſſary "for me to ſee from the written word, that infants "had *not* a right to baptiſm before I went forward to "anſwer a good conſcience," &c. p. 6. Here again he

he begs the queſtion, which is, Whether he is truly baptized or not? And concludes that he *was* baptized, and then reſolves to hold the ſame till he can ſee from the *written* word that infants have *not* a right; that is, till he can ſee the *letter* of the word condemn infant-baptiſm, which is never named in any writings either divine or human, till two hundred years after Chriſt. This is one inſtance among many of our ſhort-ſightedneſs; for while others are charged with ſticking to the letter, and acting upon negatives, he determines to hold his practice till he can find in the letter a univerſal negative againſt it: Yet in other caſes he would doubtleſs tell people, that in ordinances of worſhip it is not enough for us to ſay, It is not forbidden; for we muſt be able to anſwer that demand, Who hath *required* this at your hand? Iſa. 1. 12. After this account of himſelf, he proceeds to tell us, that beſides private chriſtians he has known eight ordained elders that had been re-baptized, who have ſince retracted it. But if they did it upon the ſame principle that he did, ten thouſand times that number would not give us a warrant to follow them. The truth is, about 20 years ago in a ſeaſon of awakning and hopeful converſions in ſeveral places, the two denominations were brought to greater freedom toward each other, than in former times, which was a means of bringing many to a better underſtanding of the baptiſts principles, than they formerly had, and many embraced them; which cauſed others to riſe in great oppoſition thereto, and ſome leading men gave the alarm much as Mr. *F.* does in this preface. And a number were frightned and turned back; though I ſhould think they have no great cauſe of glorying therein; for two of the eight miniſters that he ſpeaks of, fell ſo much out of credit, as to drop preaching, and inliſted as ſoldiers into the army, and laid their bones in the wilderneſs. Two more of them

them, parted from their flocks, and though they were ſettled over others, yet they did not continue there, but are now in an unſettled ſtate; and others can hardly treat their baptiſt brethren with a good temper. On the other hand, I have heard many confeſs that they have been afraid of the light in this matter, and after many years oppoſition, have given as rational and ſcriptural accounts of their being convinced that our principles were right, as I ever heard in any caſe whatever.

Mr. *F.* ſays, "All the ſober ſolid baptiſts, would "likely renounce their conduct in this caſe alſo, could "they calmly, and with a ſingle eye, ſearch the ſcrip-"tures in this matter."—P. 6. But whether he has taken a proper method to introduce ſuch a *calm* ſearch or not, is left to the reader's judgment; and whether he has or not, yet oh that ſuch a temper may be now granted to us!

As to the rule itſelf, I agree with him, that ſatan lays two ſnares to hinder our taking of it right; one is to impoſe upon the judgment by an elevated imagination of ſomething new and wonderful in the ſcriptures, taking plain paſſages and turning them into an allegorical ſtrain or figurative ſenſe, ſo that the judgment miſſeth the duties taught or doctrines contained in the text: Or elſe, when it will ſuit his turn, he will try to keep us to the bare letter of the word, without regarding the true nature of God's will contained therein. And I fully concur, that when we take the ſcriptures right, they have "a natural "tendency to lead the mind into a conformity to "God's pure nature, which alſo tends to humble "and purify the heart, and lead the mind into an "underſtanding of the divine *harmony* of the ſcrip-"tures, which opens a path that leads home to "glory."—P. 7, 8. In that path may we ever walk!

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I would here add, that our Lord's conſtant method of repelling the tempter, was by ſaying, *It is written*. And when the adverſary attempted to inſnare him in the ſame way, he would not depart from it to myſtical meaning, but brought another text which cut directly acroſs the partial ſenſe which the devil would put upon ſcripture. It is a known rule in divinity, not to depart from the literal ſenſe of a text, when it will clearly agree with the reſt of the bible; but if that ſenſe will not agree with other texts, then we may know it has a myſtical, and not a literal meaning. As for inſtance, *David* ſays, *My fleſh ſhall reſt in hope, becauſe thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption.* Now other ſcriptures evidence that *David*'s fleſh ſaw corruption, from whence *Peter* demonſtrates, that it is not literal but ſpiritual *David* who is there intended, *Acts* 2. 25——31. Yet the reſt of the text ſtands good in its literal ſenſe, elſe the apoſtle could not have proved his point (Jeſus's reſurrection) from it; for only turn the words fleſh and corruption, to a myſtical ſenſe, and the reſurrection of the Meſſiah's body could never be proved from that text. Hence we may learn that the literal ſenſe of every text, and part of a text, is not to be departed from, when it clearly agrees with the analogy of faith. At the ſame time the plaineſt paſſages may admit of many myſtical or ſpiritual improvements, while the literal ſenſe ſtands good. It was never the leſs true in a literal ſenſe, that *Abraham* had two ſons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman, becauſe *Paul* drew an allegory from thence concerning the two covenants: Yea, ſo far from it, that the literal facts are the foundation he goes upon in his allegory.

Now let us come to apply theſe rules to the caſe before us. Mr. *F.* agrees with us, that, "Read where

"you will in the ſcriptures, faith is put before bap-
"tizing, as to adult perſons, that never were baptized."
And he ſays, "The point in debate is, whether the
"infants of believers are ſubjects or not?"—P. 4. He
holds that they are, and to prove it turns us to *Abra-
ham*'s covenant; and attempts to prove, 1. That it
was the covenant of grace. 2. That *Abraham*'s chil-
dren were included therein. 3. That the Gentile
church is graffed into the ſame covenant. And, 4.
That their children are taken in with them.

But in order to ſettle this matter, it is needful to ex-
plain what we mean by theſe terms. I fully concur
with Mr. *F.* that, "Since *Adam*, our firſt natural head,
"fell from the covenant which he was placed in, the
"tenor of which was, *do and live*; *tranſgreſs and die*,
"the Moſt High has never come to commune with
"any of the race of *Adam*, nor to offer good to them,
"but only in the ſecond Head, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt."
P. 9, 10. And if by covenant of grace, we mean the
glorious plan of ſalvation, which was laid in the divine
mind from eternity, and was diſcovered at *ſundry times
and in divers manners* to the *fathers* in the old teſta-
ment, and is brought into clear light in the new; and
that one of thoſe *divers manners*, was by *Abraham*'s
covenant: In this we have no difference. But if by
the covenant of grace, he means the conſtitution, and
limits of the *Jewiſh* church, which deſcended in the line
of natural generation, taking in with the parents all
their natural offspring, which is evidently his meaning;
in this I cannot concur with him, for theſe reaſons.

I. Becauſe this is an attempt to *make man wiſer
than God*. For *Paul* in treating of the bleſſings which
the goſpel reveals, ſays, *Which things we ſpeak, not in
the* WORDS *which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which
the* HOLY GHOST *teacheth; comparing ſpiritual things
with ſpiritual*, 1 Cor. 2. 13. And in explaining
the

the design and end of the *Hebrew* covenant and ordinances, he says, the *new covenant* is *not according* to that which was made with *their fathers*, Heb. 8. 9. Yet Mr. *F.* will dare to assert, that the apostle, "Is "not in this text speaking of two covenants, distinct "in their nature and original; but of the same cove-"nant, under two different administrations?" P. 11. And he charges us with "ignorance," p. 13. because we will not contradict the Holy Ghost as he does! He would have it that we bring those words in a wrong sense; but instead of following our Lord's example, and bringing another text which is *written*, contrary to our sense of this, he brings the language of *man's wisdom* to contradict the language of divine inspiration; for he owns that, "we do not read the word, Christ, "nor grace, nor faith, nor the new covenant in Gen. "17." P. 9. And yet will venture to bring that chapter to contradict what is expresst in Heb. 8. 9.

II. I cannot concur with his plan, because it contradicts the *spirit as well as letter of the new covenant*. And that, 1. In the seal of it; the flesh of their foreskin was to be circumcised, and God said to *Abraham*, *My covenant shall be in your flesh*: While he says of the new covenant, *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.* 2. In the way they are brought into covenant. Natural birth, or purchase for money, brought persons into *Abraham*'s covenant; while 'tis only Christ's purchase and the new birth that brings any into the new covenant. 3. The tenor of *Abraham*'s covenant enjoins conditions and works to be performed by men; the neglect of which exposed them to be *cut off from their people*, because they had *broken* that *covenant*, Gen. 17. 14. Therefore the *letter* of it was, *Do and live*; and the reason here given for setting of it aside is, *because they continued not in it, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.* But the

tenor

tenor of the new covenant is, *I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a people*, Heb. 8. 9, 10. 4. Theſe covenants differ greatly as to the ſtate of thoſe who are under them. The ſtate that *Iſrael* were in when they were called forth by *Moſes* to enter into covenant, *As* God had *ſworn to their father* Abraham, was ſuch that they had *not an heart to perceive,—eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear*, no not unto *that day*, Deut. 29. 4,——13. *

But the ſtate of thoſe who are under the new covenant is, they *all know the Lord from the leaſt to the greateſt, and their ſins and iniquities he will remember no more*, Heb. 8. 11, 12. and 10. 17.

Mr. *F.* has two ways to evade the force of this reaſoning: The firſt is to tell us we ſtick to the *letter*. If in this he has any reference to 2 Cor. 3. 6. I deſire it may be noted that *Paul* is there opening the difference between the *Jewiſh* and chriſtian miniſtry, and ſhews that the *Jews* ſtuck ſo cloſe to the letter, both of the moral and ceremonial law, that they could not *ſtedfaſtly*

* Dr. *Bellamy* in his late dialogues againſt a half-way covenant; Mr. *Green* and others, have aſſerted that all the members of that church were received upon a ſuppoſition that they were true believers; whereas *Moſes* was ſo far from receiving them upon that ſuppoſition, that in this text he openly declared the contrary, as plainly as words can expreſs. And Mr. *Beckwith*, makes uſe of this text, againſt Mr. *Green*, to prove that a profeſſion of ſaving faith is not neceſſary in order to come into a goſpel church. P. 71, 72. Such are the effects of confounding the two covenants together; for Mr. *Beckwith* declares that the grand point in this debate is, "Whether the Gentile church is not "taken into the *ſame* covenant God eſtabliſhed with the *Jewiſh* "church?" P 101. And he has confuſed and darkened things ſo much in this way, that he at laſt ventures to aſſert that we have no reaſon to think that "any thing more is intended," in the *Eunuch's* profeſſion, in Acts 8. 37. but a belief, "upon moral evidence," and therefore, that it did not imply a profeſſion of ſaving faith. P. 55. Which notion of his is certainly falſe, as Rom. 10, 9, 10. is true.

ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed; and this *vail* kept them from ſeeing the glorious fulfilment of the law in Jeſus Chriſt, who *giveth life*; but the *letter killeth*. In ſhort, with the *letter* of the old teſtament, they would exclude the *truth* of the new; and the reader is left to judge who comes neareſt to ſuch conduct now.

His other evaſion is by charging us with, "Not "diſtinguiſhing between a ſoul's being internally united "to Chriſt, and a perſon's being in viſible covenant "relation." P. 31. But this charge is very unjuſt, for we are well ſenſible of that diſtinction, and the diſpute is not whether ſome may not, through man's imperfection, be admitted as true believers who are not ſo; but it is, whether the rule gives us warrant to baptize any without a perſonal profeſſion of their being ſuch or not? Thoſe who were baptized in the firſt chriſtian church, were they that *gladly received the word*; and thoſe which the Lord added to that church were *ſuch as ſhould be ſaved*, Acts 2. 41, 47. And when two perſons had crept in, who were falſe hearted, they were awfully ſtruck dead, as a warning to others, and it had that effect; for we read that, *of the reſt durſt no man join himſelf to them; but believers were the more added to the Lord*, Act. 5. 13, 14. And when the people of *Samaria* believed and were baptized, yet as ſoon as one of them diſcovered his unſoundneſs, *Peter* ſaid to him, *Thou haſt neither part nor lot in this matter*; and for this reaſon, becauſe *thy heart is not right in the ſight of God*, Acts 8. 21. Here this diſtinction is plain; they were received to baptiſm as true believers, and were rejected when they diſcovered that they were not ſuch. The ſame may be obſerved in *Rom.* 11. compared with *John* 15. Chriſt is the *Vine*, his members are *grafted in*, and *ſtand by faith* in him; but if any are received

as branches of him who is the Head of his church, that prove fruitleſs, they will be *broken off*, and *taken away*, while living branches are *purged* that they may bring forth *more fruit*. Take the diſtinction thus, and the ſenſe is clear; but take it as Mr. *F.* does, that the *Gentiles* are brought into the *ſame* covenant with the *Jews*, p. 18. and the natural conſequence is a national church; for all know the *Jewiſh* church was national. At the ſame time *Arminians* draw an argument from hence for their doctrine of falling from grace; and the ſenſe given above, is the beſt guard againſt both of theſe abuſes of the apoſtles diſcourſe.

III. I can't concur with Mr. *F*—'s ſcheme, becauſe it tends to deſtroy that *diſtinction* between the church and the world, which was deſigned by all thoſe covenants. In the firſt diſcovery of grace which God ever made to fallen man, he made a diſtinction and declared an irreconcilable enmity between the *two ſeeds*; which was verified in the two firſt children who were born: And after the wicked ſon had killed his brother, and *Seth* was born, he was ſaid to be *another ſeed inſtead of* Abel *whom* Cain *ſlew*. And for many generations the diſtinction was kept up between the *ſons of God*, and the *children of men*: And when they had *corrupted their way*, and loſt this diſtinction, God ſaid to *Noah*, *The end of all fleſh is come before me*;—*I will deſtroy them with the earth*; *but with thee will I eſtabliſh my covenant*, Gen. 6. 13, 18. Accordingly he and his family were ſaved, while the world was deſtroyed, and religion was handed down among his poſterity for ſome ages; and when they had turned to idolatry, God called Abraham *alone and bleſſed him*, Iſa. 51. 2. And carried his ſeed through an *iron furnace* in *Egypt*, and wrought great wonders for them in the wilderneſs, and in the promiſed land, and gave them ſuch laws and ordinances as were ſufficient to

keep

keep them a religious people, in diſtinction from all others, if it was poſſible for outward means to do it. *But the chief of the prieſts, and of the people, tranſgreſſed very much, after all the abominations of the Heathen*;—*therefore the Lord brought upon them the King of the* Chaldees, 2 Chron. 36 14,—17.

Hitherto covenants had included parents with their natural offspring; but at this time the Lord ſaid to the prophet, *Behold the days come that I will make a new covenant with the houſe of* Iſrael; NOT ACCORDING *to the covenant that I made with their fathers*, Jer. 31. 31, &c. And the new teſtament ſhews abundantly that the difference lies in this, that the covenant now runs in a ſpiritual and not in a natural line. The apoſtle in the ninth of the *Romans* ſhews, that the line runs, not in the *children of the fleſh*, but in the *children of God*, who are a *remnant* that *ſhall be ſaved*. And in the tenth chapter he opens the order of the goſpel;—*that faith cometh by hearing the word of God*, (not by natural deſcent) which word is *believed with the heart*, and then *confeſſed with the mouth*. And theſe only are God's people in a goſpel ſenſe. Upon this the eleventh chapter begins with this objection, *Hath God caſt away his people?* In anſwer to which the apoſtle ſhews that he and a number more of *Abraham*'s natural ſeed, were not caſt away; even a *remnant according to the election of grace*; *and if by grace, then* it is *no more of works: Otherwiſe grace is no more grace.*

I ſuppoſe Mr. *F.* will agree with me, that the believing Gentiles were graffed in among *ſpiritual Iſrael*, and yet he would bring his *natural* offſpring in with him; but what the apoſtle here ſays of grace and works, is as true of fleſh and ſpirit; they are diſtinct, and ought never to be confounded together: Yet ſince they are in this caſe, I would obſerve that the prieſt-

hood was as expreſly given to *Aaron*'s poſterity by an *everlaſting covenant*, Num. 25. 13. as ever church-memberſhip was to *Abraham*'s ſeed; yea much more ſtrictly; for none but *Aaron*'s lawful ſeed might ever miniſter in the prieſts office in that church, and the ſtranger that came nigh was to be put to death, Num. 18. 7. while ſtrangers were freely admitted into *Abraham*'s covenant: And why is not *Aaron*'s everlaſting covenant regarded as much as *Abraham*'s? And thoſe miniſters who often tell us of *David*'s error in not having the ark carried upon the prieſts ſhoulders, which they deſign as a warning againſt any perſons preaching that they have not approbated, how dare they introduce any into the miniſtry who are not miniſters natural ſeed? If they ſay, *Aaron* was a type of Chriſt, and his children a type of the ſaints; we readily grant it: And miniſters, in diſtinction from other ſaints, are never called prieſts in the new teſtament; therefore how dare they attempt to take the ark from theſe prieſts ſhoulders, who are the *pillar and ground of the truth*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. and aſſume it to themſelves?—This leads me to ſay,

IV. I cannot join with Mr. *F.* in his way of conſtruing the new teſtament by the old, becauſe it opens a door for the greateſt part of the *ſuperſtitions* and abominations that have ever been impoſed upon the chriſtian church. When we interpret the old teſtament by the new, then it appears plain that all thoſe covenants which included the children with their fathers, were figures of the great Head of the church and his members: And that ſince he is come, thoſe covenants as well as ordinances are done away. But when men turned to interpreting the new teſtament by the old, then they muſt have a *Pope* to anſwer to the high prieſt; and as goſpel privileges are allowed to be greater than thoſe of the *Jews*, they muſt

must have more orders of office than the priests had, with *surplices* instead of their *ephods*; yea *tythes*, and what not? And as the priests sentence decided abundance of cases in the *Jewish* church, what pleas have been made from thence for the pope's power, and for ministerial authority, to the depriving of the saints of their precious right of judging for themselves in religion, instead of allowing the government of the church now, to be in this *holy priesthood*? 1 Pet. 2. 5.

He before whom all things are naked and opened, gave early warning against these snares, and not only told his people that the *covenant* which literal *Israel* stood in was *old*, and ready to *vanish away*; but also that Jesus has *blotted out* that *hand-writing of ordinances*, and taken it out of the way, *nailing it to his cross*: And this he gives as a caution not to let *philosophers judge them*, nor with their *vain deceit* introduce *ordinances* among them after the *commandments and doctrines of men*, Col. 2. 8, 14, 16, 20.

Another pernicious effect of this way of construing scripture, is the breaking down the walls of Christ's vineyard, and laying it as an open field, so that all sorts of persons may come to the Lord's table, almost without distinction. This evil in the national church was a principal cause of our fathers leaving it, and coming to this country. And they held strictly that none ought to be received into the church, without a declaration of a work of grace in their hearts; and that none but such might bring their children to baptism till those children began to have families. Then came on a trial concerning what should be done with their infants; and Mr. *Henry Dunstar*, president of *Harvard* college, (soon after he had finished that version of the Psalms which has been used in *New-England* ever since) was convinced so that he "thought himself under some

"obligation to bear his testimony in some sermons, a-
"gainst the administration of baptism to any infant
"whatsoever." * And Mr. *Mitchel*, pastor of the church in *Cambridge*, was by his means brought to great scruples of infant-baptism, yet he soon concluded they were from the *evil one*, and to guard against them says, "I resolved on Mr. *Hooker*'s principle, that I "would have an argument able to remove a mountain "before I would recede from a truth or practice re-"ceived among the faithful." † And having *resolved* and prayed and strove against them for nine years, he got furnished so, that the author of his life informs us, that the determination of the point, in the Synod of 1662, about persons owning the covenant and bringing their children, "Was more owing to him than to any "one man in the world." And the ground he introduced them upon was that, "If the parent be in the "visible church, his infant child is so also.". Yet whether these persons should be baptized as in a *catholic*, or in a *particular* church state, this says he, "Is ano-"ther question: And I confess myself not altogether "so peremptory,—as in the thing itself, viz. *That* "*they ought to be baptized.*" ‡

Thus the influence of tradition and a fond conceit of securing religion to their posterity, caused such as were otherwise worthy men, to be *peremptory* in putting the badge of membership upon them, before they knew whether they were members of the universal church, or of a particular one; notwithstanding they had declared a few years before, in the *Cambridge* platform, that the church under the gospel is *not national*, but *congregational*. And Mr. *Mitchel*, after this, took much pains to shew that none ought to be received to full communion in the church, but such as gave an account of a work of grace in their souls, and concluded what

* *Mitchel*'s life, p. 67. † Ibid. p. 70. ‡ Pag. 78.

what he wrote on that ſubject with theſe words, viz. "The power of godlineſs will ſoon be loſt, if only "doctrinal knowledge and outward blameleſsneſs be "accounted ſufficient for all church privileges, and "*practical confeſſions* (or examinations of men's *ſpiri-* "*tual eſtate*) be laid aſide; for that which people ſee "to be publicly required and held in reputation, that "will they look after, and uſually no more, but con- "tent themſelves with *that*. Conſider, if this hath "not been a reaſon of the formality and deadneſs that "have overgrown many churches." *January* 4. 1664.*

To this the author of his life adds the teſtimony of the churches of *Bohemia*, who obſerve that, "Chriſt "hath forbid our giving of *holy things* unto *unholy* "*perſons*: † And that chriſtianity is to begin with re- "*pentance*, and not with the *ſacraments*." Aſtoniſh- ing, that men ſhould know all this, and yet go on as they did, to begin it with the ſacrament of baptiſm be- fore repentance! Yet thus they proceeded for above 40 years, and then Mr. *Solomon Stoddard* of *North- ampton*, thought it unreaſonable to admit perſons to one ordinance and not to the other, and publiſhed a ſermon from *Exod.* 12. 44, &c. where all who were circumciſed were expreſly commanded to keep the paſſover; from whence he argued that all thoſe who were baptized, if not debared by open ſcandal, ought to come to the ſupper, as they did to other means for converſion. Dr. *Increaſe Mather* wrote a- gainſt this; to which Mr. *Stoddard* replied in a book called an *Appeal to the learned*. Of which Mr. *Frothing- ham* ſaid ſome years ago, that, "It appears ſome- "what ſtrange and unaccountable, that Mr. *Stoddard* "or any body elſe (who experimentally know God, "and the clear doctrines of the goſpel) ſhould hold "ſuch principles as goſpel inſtitutions, and not have

"goſpel

* *Mitchel*'s life, p. 88. † Matt. 6. 7.

" goſpel truths and light to ſupport the ſame, but muſt " be under a neceſſity to repair to the more dark and " *aboliſhed* diſpenſations under the law to ſupport their " principles; for this is the very caſe with the author " in his *appeal to the learned*; and were it not for the " *ceremonial* inſtitutions of *circumciſion* & the *paſſover*, " the author would have been nonplus'd to have main- " tained his arguments to ſupport his principles." *

So he would; and Mr. *F.* would be as much nonplus'd to ſupport his principle of infant-baptiſm without one of thoſe *aboliſhed* ceremonies, as any would be to ſupport the principle he condemns, without the other. Nay, to make circumciſion a type of water baptiſm, is to involve himſelf in the abſurdity he now would charge upon us, viz. make it a " Type of a " type, or a ſhadow of a ſhadow." P. 16.

Preſident *Edwards* wrote 20 years ago, and Mr. *Jacob Green* of *New-Jerſey*, has done the like lately, to ſhew that perſons ought to profeſs ſanctifying grace, in order to be admitted into the church; but againſt the one and the other, Mr. *Blake*'s words have been quoted, who ſays, " I have often marvelled what men " mean, when they ſpeak of admiſſion of members in- " to churches, when the parties of whom they ſpeak " have already equal right with themſelves, to mem- " berſhip: If baptiſm is admiſſion, then their title is " as good that were thus before admitted, as their's " that give them admiſſion." † And how can Mr. *F.* ſtand before this reaſoning, while he holds as he does, that the children of believers, " are bleſſed of Chriſt, " and belong to his *viſible* kingdom, which is the eſſen- " tial part; baptiſm is but a conſequence that follow- " eth?" P. 23. If ſo, why does not the other ordinance

* Mr. *Frothingham*'s diſcourſe on the churches privileges, pag. 78, 79. † *Beckwith*, againſt *Green*, 1769, p. 37.

nance follow alſo? For both equally belong to Chriſt's viſible kingdom? His conſequence therefore proves either too much, or too little for his purpoſe; for he has long been contending againſt an half-way covenant, ſo that if theſe children are "in covenant with God;" as he aſſerts in the ſame page, then they have a right to all the ordinances of Chriſt's viſible kingdom; but if he limits the matter to thoſe only who are truly "bleſſed of Chriſt;" or where *Peter* did, "Even to "as many as the Lord ſhall call;" then he gives up the point, and comes into our ſentiments. And how is it poſſible to hold a right to baptiſm from circumciſion, and yet deny baptized perſons right to the ſupper; unleſs miniſters do by divine rules, as 'tis loudly complained, that rulers at this day do by human laws, viz. aſſume a *diſcretionary* power to take what ſuits their turn, and neglect the reſt!

Theſe things naturally tend as I ſaid, to lay Chriſt's vineyard as an open field, and a great part of the miniſters of our land now apply to the *church* what he ſaid of the *world*, in Matt. 13. 30, 38. So Mr. *Blakwith*, in his late anſwer to Mr. *Green*, ſays, "*Let both* "*grow together until the harveſt*, is Chriſt's direction to his churches." P. 21. According to which, thoſe who *appear* by their *fruits* to be *children of the wicked One*, muſt be let alone in the church 'till the harveſt, and what a church is that! And this conſtruing of the new teſtament by the old, has greatly corrupted the doctrines as well as the order of the church. Dr. *Taylor*, one of the greateſt champions that has appeared in our day againſt *Calviniſm*; in his diſcourſe which he calls, 'A key to the apoſtolic writings,' takes the conditional and figurative language of the old teſtament to explain the new with, by which key he would take *Paul*'s words, where he ſpeaks of *Adam*'s poſterity becoming

ſinners

ſinners in and by him, and of juſtification by Chriſt alone, &c. and turn them from their plain meaning, to ſome figurative ſenſe, in order to evade the evidence which they give for the doctrines which he diſlikes; though herein he does nothing leſs than make the inſpired Apoſtle a liar, whoſays, *We uſe great* PLAINNESS *of ſpeech, and* NOT AS Moſes *which put a veil over his face, that the children of* Iſrael *could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed*, 2 Cor. 3. 12, 13. I ſay, he does nothing leſs than make the apoſtle a liar, repreſenting that AS *Moſes* he uſes obſcure figures, and not *great plainneſs!* And oh! that my fathers and brethren ſaw how much they countenance ſuch horrid conduct, while they take the figurative covenants and ordinances in the old teſtament to conſtrue what the goſpel ſays concerning the new covenant by, and ſtigmatize thoſe who take the goſpel *plainly* to mean as it ſays, with the name of ſticking to the *letter only!*

Mr. *Beckwith* pretends to hold to the *Calvaniſtic* doctrines, yet he thinks Mr. *Green* is "much miſtaken," in ſuppoſing that a perſon's coming to goſpel ordinances *implies* a declaration of repentance and ſaving faith: And (with Mr. *Williams* of *Lebanon*) comparing it to a marriage, ſays, the bride "does not profeſs that ſhe "*has* performed the articles of the marriage cove-"nant; but that ſhe *will* perform them thenceforth, "to the end of her life." And calling the ordinances ſeals, he ſays, "God's giving or ſetting on his ſeal, by "the hand of his embaſſador, implies his gracious and "ſure engagement to fulfil and make good to that "ſoul, all the bleſſings of grace and ſalvation pro-"miſed in the covenants; *provided*, or on *condition* "that perſon keeps or fulfils the *obedience* and *duty* "engaged for on his part; ſo that both ways, ordi-

"nances

"nances ſeal conditionally." * It ſeems then accor-ding to him, that perſons are eſpouſed to Chriſt in in-fant-baptiſm, but not married to him till they make an open profeſſion; yet then the tenor of their marriage covenant is, *I will, if they will*, inſtead of *I will, and they ſhall*, Heb. 8. 10. But they have no need of mi-niſters to help them into that covenant, for we are all naturally wedded to it; and the apoſtle expreſly ſhews that a pretence of being married to Chriſt when we are not *dead to the law*, is *adultery*, Rom. 7. 3, 4. And how much ſuch adultery is there at this day in our land! What an awful account will miniſters have to

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* *Bekwith* againſt *Green*, p. 27. In p. 22. he ſays, "Miniſters "and churches have a right to enquire into, and judge of "the viſible ſtanding of their members, but not the inviſible "ſtate of their hearts: *Who art thou that judgeſt another man's "ſervant?*"—And he inſiſts much upon it, that if baptiſm belonged only to real ſaints, then "we could not with any "ſafety or ſatisfaction, adminiſter it at all." P. 43. Well what is this *viſible ſtanding* which we have a right to judge of? Why he ſays, "Then we have a *ſure* foundation to go "upon, in determining who have a right to the ſeals and who "not, viz. ſuch as are of *ſound principles* in the chriſtian faith, "and *morally ſincere* in their covenanting; this gives a right "to all the ſeals." P. 44. I wonder what Mr. *B.* thinks *ſound principles*, or *moral ſincerity* is; whether ſomething in-ward, or only an outward ſhew! It makes me think of an affair that happened ſome years ago, not far from him: A man of note declared that a perſon might externally keep all the precepts of the moral law, out of regard to *Moloch*; and when ſeveral things were ſaid to expoſe the abſurdity of this notion, it was objected that they did not take notice that he ſaid, *externally*. Yes, ſays the other, I obſerve he means that a perſon may love God with *all his heart, externally!* In reality it is quite as difficult to know when a perſon has moral ſincerity, as ſaving faith; one lies in conviction and reſtraint upon the conſcience, the other is the love of the truth in the heart: And it often happens that when a perſon that has had ſome conviction, gets into the church, ſo as to *eat and drink* in the divine preſence, he ſhakes off his concern, and his *laſt ſtate is worſe than the firſt.*

to give, if inſtead of opening to ſinners who come to them, the nature and ſtrictneſs of the divine law, teaching them that the *ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin*; and that *as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe*; and that *Chriſt was made a curſe for us, that the bleſſing of* Abraham *might come on the Gentiles, that we might receive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith?* Gal. 3. 10,—14, 22. I ſay, who inſtead of this, invite them to the ordinances, and tell them that, "All the bleſſings of grace and ſalvation "are promiſed to their ſouls, on *condition* that they ful- "fil the *obedience* and *duty* engaged for on their part!"

This is the ſame ſcheme that was introduced among the churches of *Galatia*, the tenor of which was, *The man that doth them ſhall live in them*, ver. 12. Neither can the word, grace and ſalvation, make it to be goſpel now, any more than the words *Abraham* and circumciſion could then; for both then and now it is *doing* in order for life, inſtead of *receiving by faith* in order to do, ver. 2.

I am ſatisfied that Mr. *F.* does not commonly teach perſons in ſuch a way; yet I thought it might be of ſome benefit to him and others to expoſe theſe dangerous ſnares here; and if he ſhould think it an injury thus to be introduced into the company of miniſters who invite ſouls to ordinances to be converted, let him look into his 28th page, where he ſays, "The parent has an advantage to improve the "child's early dedication in baptiſm (as the child "grows up to years of underſtanding) in order for "the child's conviction and converſion." If baptiſm then is a converting ordinance, why not the ſupper alſo? However I would aſk, Was you convicted of ſin, and converted to Chriſt, by being told by your parents that you was born "Holy, or in covenant "with God;" and that you in your infancy was,

"Bleſſed

"Bleſſed of Chriſt, and belonged to his viſible kin-
"dom?" P. 23. I am far from believing that, and rather credit your former account, where you ſay, we are "Utterly ſlain by the holy law of God, and "compleatly conquered into the hands of a ſovereign "God, where we ſee juſtice clear, and God's throne "guiltleſs, if we were eternally damned. Thus be-"ing conquered, the holy Ghoſt revealed Jeſus Chriſt "to our ſouls, in his glory, power, love and all-"ſufficiency,—and our ſouls accepted him freely upon "goſpel terms; and ſo the Lord wrought in our "ſouls, faith and love, which was accompanied with "a living union to Chriſt, and a new obedience, "which flows from an immortal principle of life-"neſs to God." *

This looks like converſion, but the other is the ſame point that the *Jews* contended ſo much upon formerly, who, as Mr. *Edwards* obſerves, looked upon themſelves, "As by nature *holy* and favourites "of God, becauſe they were the children of *Abra-*"*ham.*" And in order to convince them of this great error, he takes notice that the Apoſtle labour'd in *Rom.* 5. 12,—14. "To take off their eyes from "their father *Abraham*, who was their father in "diſtinction from other nations, and direct them to "their father *Adam*, who was the common father "of mankind, and equally of *Jews* and Gentiles." †
Here the matter centers when all is ſaid and done. The children of believers are, *by nature children of wrath* EVEN *as others:* Chriſt hath *broken down the middle wall of partition*, and *came and preached peace* to all: And the *promiſe is given to them that believe.* ‡
And whoever pretends that the natural offspring of

* Diſcourſe on the churches privileges, pag. 6, 7.
† Mr. *Edwards* againſt Dr. *Taylor*, p. 272.
‡ *Eph.* 2 3, 14, 17. Gal. 3. 22.

profeſſors have a better claim thereto than others, let it be a *Peter* or *Barnabas*, they ought to be *withſtood to the face* for *building again* that wall of partition between *Jews by nature* and *ſinners of the Gentiles* which *they once deſtroyed*, Gal. 2. 11,—18. This affair carried away thoſe great Apoſtles with *diſſimulation*, and I never ſaw ſo much deceit diſcovered among good men in my day, in any other concern, as in this. And the way that 'tis often covered, even from themſelves as well as others, is by the ambiguity of words. It was a ſolemn demand which was made to *Job*, after his long diſpute with his friends, "Who is this that *darkneth counſel* with "*words* without *knowledge*?" And it ſurely calls for our ſpecial notice in the preſent debate. To uſe *words* without diſtinct, or without a ſteady meaning, ever tends to *darken counſel*; yet, as Mr. *Locke* obſerves, we often ſee this to be the caſe in diſputes, and that with words on which the argument chiefly turns. And I think his cenſure is juſt upon ſuch conduct. "One, "ſays he, who ſhould ſpeak thus in the affairs and "buſineſs of the world, and call eight ſometimes ſeven, "ſometimes nine, as beſt ſerved his advantage, would "preſently have clap'd upon him one of the two names "men conſtantly are diſguſted with, (i. e. fool or "knave); and yet in arguings and learned conteſts, "the ſame ſort of proceeding paſſes commonly for "wit and learning: But yet to me, it appears a greater diſhoneſty, than the miſplacing of counters, in "the caſting up a debt, and the cheat the greater, by "how much truth is of greater concernment and value than money." *

Now let us ſee if we have not ſomething of the ſame nature in the preſent controverſy. The words on which it chiefly turns, are, "The covenant of grace was

* Eſſay on human underſtanding, B. III. chap. 10. S. 5.

was made with *Abraham*, and believers are now in the *ſame* covenant." We readily grant that the covenant of grace was made known to him, and that he was ſaved by faith, as ſaints are now; but the covenant of circumciſion, as it contained the conſtitution and limits of the *Jewiſh* church, we cannot look upon to be the ſame that believers are in now. Well they allow ſome difference; for the *Jews* are broken off, and the Gentiles are graffed in, and have greater privileges. How? why tis ſaid, Then the church was limited to one nation, now it is open for all believers to come in with their houſholds. Yet when the matter is examined, they don't mean to have all the *men* of their houſholds baptized as *Abraham*'s were circumciſed, but only their *infants*; neither do they mean that every one of them *when* they have baptized them, ſhall *then* eat the Lord's ſupper, as all *Iſrael* did the paſſover. So that they cannot hold the conſtitution of the church to be the ſame; but *conſtitution* is not a ſcriptural word, and they ſtill aſſert that the covenant is the ſame as it was with *Abraham*; and when we bring *Paul*'s words, which ſhew it is not the ſame, then we ſtick to the letter, and tis declared that he does not mean two diſtinct covenants, only the ſame under two adminiſtrations. Juſt now the word *conſtitution* was unſcriptural, but now *adminiſtration* muſt come in to prove that *Paul* did not mean as he ſaid!

Another turn for thoſe words in Heb. 8. 9. is that the new covenant there means the internal efficacy of the covenant; as if it had no internal efficacy till that time: Whereas Rom. 4. 11. ſpeaks plainly of its inward efficacy to *Abraham*; but they often attempt from that text to prove that the external covenant now is the ſame with the covenant of circumciſion.

Thus we have a covenant that is the ſame, and not the ſame; larger than the covenant of circumciſion, yet

yet not ſo large; a different adminiſtration, yet they adminiſter ordinances to the ſame ſubjects,—believers and their houſholds; though ſtill it is only to part of them, to wit, the infants therein. Upon another turn there is a great difference, for the old covenant was external, the new one is internal;——yet after all it is as external as the *Jewiſh* covenant was, and only has different ordinances, but the ſame ſubjects! I muſt confeſs this makes me think of the beaſt which *myſtery Babylon* ſat upon, which *was, and is not, and yet is*, Rev. 17. 8. I read alſo in an ancient record that, *her ways are moveable, that thou canſt not know them*, Prov. 5. 6. And does it not give us reaſon to think, this practice was derived from her, ſince it requires ſuch *movings* and ſhifting to ſupport it?

The divine command is, *Make ſtrait paths for your feet.* Which if we obey, and come *ſtrait* up to the point, we may find that as baptiſm is an external ordinance of the goſpel church now, as circumciſion was of the *Jewiſh* church formerly; and that neither of them were introduced by man's conjectures, but by expreſs command: So that the ſubjects of each are plainly expreſt in the command, and not left for men to find out by uncertain conſequences. The firſt adminiſtrator of baptiſm warned the *Jews* againſt thinking to come to it with a plea that they had *Abraham* to their father; and when a complaint was made againſt *Paul*, that he taught the *Jews* which were among the Gentiles to forſake *Moſes*, ſaying, that they *ought not to circumciſe their children*, *James* ſays, *As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded, that they obſerve* NO SUCH THINGS, Acts 21. 25. Yet now a common pretence is, that we ought to *obſerve ſuch things*, as bringing children to the ordinance on their parents right; and they ſay, "The patent ſealed by baptiſm is (ſo to ſpeak) the very

"ſame

"ſame parchment that was given to *Abraham*, and "therefore neceſſarily contains all the *ſame* privileges "and benefits, and makes theſe over to the *ſame* ſub-"*jects*; there is nothing altered, but the ſeal *only*." * And this is given as a reaſon why we have no *expreſs declaration* for bringing infants to baptiſm.

Is not this affair much like the *Jews* traditions, which the learned could not read in *the book*, becauſe it was ſealed; and the unlearned could not read it, becauſe he was *not learned?* Yet they propoſe a very good end in it, which is to keep their children in the *fear of God*. But we are aſſured that it is *in vain*,—while this fear is *taught by the precept of men*. And as vain are their *turning things upſide down*, and *ſeeking deep to hide their counſel*, Iſa. 29. 11,—16. Matt. 15. 7,—9.

Here many will turn their addreſs to people's natural paſſions, and a declaration that we condemn all our good fathers, and that we are cruel to our children, will often carry the point, even where ſcripture and reaſon both fail them. Yet if we could hear our fathers, one of the moſt eminent of them told his people when they were coming to this country, that "It "was not poſſible the chriſtian world ſhould come ſo "lately out of ſuch antichriſtian darkneſs, and that full "perfection of knowledge ſhould break forth at once." Therefore he charged them before God and his bleſſed angels, to follow him, "No farther than he followed "Chriſt;" but to act according to their covenant, wherein they, "engaged with God and one another, to "receive whatever light or truth ſhould be made "known to them from his written word." † What an abuſe then is it of mankind, to bring the name of our good fathers to hinder our acting agreeable to their covenant with God, & their ſolemn charge to us! They knew

* *Dickinſon*'s dialogue, p. 17.
† Mr. *Prince*'s chronology, p. 89, 90.

knew themſelves to be imperfect, and perhaps ſome of them gave as full evidence that they were ſo, by their conduct relating to this affair, as in any of their behaviour. Governor *Hutchinſon*, in ſpeaking of the baptiſts, ſays, "In Mr. *Hooker*'s time, ſoon after the "year 1640, it appears by his letters that *many* were "inclined that way, and he expreſſes his apprehenſion "that the *number would increaſe*." * And likely it was his fondneſs for infant-baptiſm that carried him into the *reſolution* which Mr. *Mitchel* adopted from him in 1653, viz. he "*Reſolved* he would have an "argument able to remove a mountain before he would "recede from it." And Mr. *Mitchel* owns that he was "fearful" of going to Mr. *Dunſtar*, who had been an inſtrument of ſhaking his confidence about infant-baptiſm, notwithſtanding he looked upon him to his dying day to be "a worthy and a godly man." Who yet was removed, "from the government of the *col-*"*lege*, and from his dwelling-place in *Cambridge*," for no other reaſon only, than becauſe he "thought himſelf "under ſome obligation to bear his teſtimony,—againſt "the adminiſtration of baptiſm to any infant what-"ſoever." †

We are often accuſed of *wilfulneſs* in our way, but has any thing ever appeared to ſupport the charge, comparable to what is here proved on the other ſide? And I have before ſhewn ſomething of the pernicious effects which theſe things have had in our land. And as, to *remove a mountain*, is to work a miracle, muſt we now have a miracle wrought to convince us that we ought not to follow our fathers in that which cannot be ſupported by the bible! The day is haſtning when all things will be laid open in their true nature; then will be made manifeſt, who have been cruel to their children,

* Hiſtory of the *Maſſachuſetts*, vol. I. p. 227.
† *Mitchel*'s life, p. 67,——70.

children, either those who have laboured to convince them that they are sinners by nature and practice, and have used gospel methods to bring them to Christ, and then to his special ordinances; or those who have cried *peace, peace, when there was no peace.* Yea, I think the charge of cruelty may be justly turned back upon them, even as to such of their children as afterwards prove to be godly persons; for there are great numbers of them at this day in *New-England*, who will readily own, that if there had been nothing done, they should be at no loss how to act now; and I have heard some of them say plainly that, "It appeared to them a "great privilege if they might follow their Lord *into* "*the water*," but their parents had laid a block in their way by telling them that they are already baptized, and that to be rebaptized is a dreadful thing. Thus they, and not we, cut children off from the precious privilege of *answering a good conscience* in baptism: For Mr. *F.* owns, that "In order to the conscience "being good, it must be informed from the word of "God, and act in the knowledge of the truth." P. 5. I say amen thereto; and since what the apostle says concerning *invented objects* of worship, is as true of *invented forms*, viz. *We know that they are nothing in the world*, 1 Cor. 8. 4. therefore it is no crime to leave what mistaken mortals have invented, to practice what God calls baptism in his word.

Before I close I must answer some charges of inconsistency which are laid against our principles.

1. Mr. *F.* says, "I think it is beyond them to make "their practice consistent, in denying infants right to "baptism, because the letter does not shew where an "infant was baptized; and yet at the same time keep "the first day as a sabbath, when the latter duty is far "less plain than the former." P. 4.

Let us try the point. If it is aſked why we keep the firſt day? We can ſhew that Jeſus aroſe on that day, and as the Fathers reſting from the works of creation, is given as a reaſon why the *Jews* ſhould keep the ſeventh day; ſo the SON'S reſting from the works of redemption appears a reaſon why we ſhould keep the firſt day. Hence when the Apoſtle is opening the difference between the *jewiſh* and chriſtian diſpenſations, he ſays, *There remaineth therefore a reſt* (or keeping of a *ſabbath*, as the margin reads it) *to the people of God: For* HE *that is entered into his reſt, hath ceaſed from his own works,* AS GOD *did from his*, Heb. 4. 9, 10.* And we have expreſs examples of the Apoſtles and others meeting on that day for worſhip, to break bread, and to offer their liberality, John 20. 19, 26. Acts 20. 7. 1 Cor. 16. 2. And when the apoſtle *John* would let the churches know when he had his firſt viſion in *Patmos*, he tells them it was on the *Lord's-day*, Rev. 1. 10. As to the ſtupid cant of ſome, that, Every day is the Lord's:—It is as true that every table, and every ſupper is alſo his; but what mockery would it make of the bible, to ſay when it ſpeaks of the *Lord's-table*, and the *Lord's-ſupper*, that it means no more than every table, and every ſupper! 1 Cor. 10. 21. and 11. 20. No, ſerious minds give in that it means a table and ſupper, which is ſet apart from a common to a ſacred uſe, as

* Should any ſay that this text has no reference to any particular day, but only to ſpiritual reſt. I anſwer, that baptiſm and the ſupper have reference to ſpiritual bleſſings, yet that is far from rendering the literal obſervation of them uſeleſs: So I look upon the caſe here. God ſaid of *Iſrail, I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a ſign between me and them*, Ezek. 20. 12. And a change from the ſeventh to the firſt day, ſeems to be a ſign of the difference between the two covenants, for as one required our work before the reward; ſo the other gives the ſoul *reſt* in Chriſt, in order to work for his glory.

as an ordinance of divine worſhip. So we take the *Lord's-day* to mean this day as ſet apart from other days for his worſhip, and known by that name among the churches to which *John* wrote.

What a bias of mind then is diſcovered in ſaying that this duty is, "Far leſs plain," than infant-baptiſm, of which we have neither precept nor example in all the bible! Nay, I muſt turn the argument, and obſerve, that the apoſtle names the *jewiſh ſabbath-days*, as well as *circumciſion*, among the *hand-writing of ordinances*, which Chriſt has *blotted out*, Col. 2. 11, 13, 16. And if infant-baptiſm is held from thence, why not the ſeventh day alſo?

2. Mr. *F.* ſays, "I look upon the baptiſt brethren "inconſiſtent with themſelves, for rejecting infants "from being ſubjects of baptiſm, becauſe the letter "does not ſhew where an infant was baptized; and "at the ſame time will not allow any perſon to be "baptized, unleſs put all under water, when the letter "no where ſhews that a perſon was put under water "in all the bible." P. 34. Here let the reader remember how far I have concur'd with him in the beginning about the letter: This being obſerved, I ſhall at preſent only fix upon one point, which is, that *Paul* ſays in one place, we are *buried by baptiſm*, and in another that we are *buried in baptiſm*, Rom. 6. 4. Col. 2. 12. And among all the critics upon our tranſlation, I never knew any object againſt the tranſlation of theſe words, neither do we differ about the meaning of the word *buried*: All the diſpute is concerning what is here intended by baptiſm. The word is uſed in the ſcripture, for an ordinance in the church, for a work of the ſpirit, and for ſufferings. Well let water, ſpirit, or troubles be intended here, yet ſtill the word is expreſs, we are *buried by it*,—*buried in it*. So that let men go to which they will to find out the

meaning of the word, ſtill it is *burying*; and unleſs they can make out that to be *buried* is not to be *covered*, they muſt know, that to be baptized with water, is to be covered with water.

Our author inclines to the old abſurdity, of running to places where the word baptiſm is uſed in a *figurative* way, to find out its *literal* meaning: But what work ſhould we make if we ſhould determine the full meaning of the word *thief*, by Rev. 16. 15! He tells us of God's "pouring out his ſpirit, and of raining down "righteouſneſs. P. 34. So he does, and who does not know that waters which compoſe *rivers* were firſt rained down from above? And the bleſſings which flow from Chriſt are called, *Rivers of water in a dry place*. Iſa. 32. 2. And the account which divine inſpiration gives of the diſciples being baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, ſays, *It filled all the houſe* where they were ſitting:—And they were *all filled* with the Holy Ghoſt, Acts 2. 2, 4. So as to Chriſt's ſufferings which are called a baptiſm, we have ſcarce a clearer prophecy of them any where than in the 69th Pſalm; and in that Pſalm, the ſame perſon who ſays, "They "gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they "gave me vinegar to drink;" alſo ſays, "I am come "into *deep waters*, where the *floods overflow me*," ver. 2, 21. How plainly do all theſe carry the idea of immerſion in the meaning of the word? Mr. *F.* cites a great number of texts, in order to prove that ſprinkling, and waſhing or bathing, mean the ſame thing; but they are far from anſwering his deſign. For inſtance, in Num. 19. 18. to *dip* and to *ſprinkle*, plainly convey two ideas, as diſtinct from each other as the words are; and ſo does *ſprinkling* and *bathing* in the next verſe. And in the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, where the deſign of theſe ceremonies is explained, it appears that *ſprinkling* referred to the removal of guilt, and

waſhing

waſhing or *bathing*, to the taking away the filth of ſin; or in other words, the firſt referred to juſtification, the other to ſanctification. The *ſprinkling of blood* protected from the ſtroke of vengeance, and *ſprinkling* the *conſcience* removes its guilt; but having our *bodies* (or whole man) *waſhed with pure water* is alſo neceſſary in order to *draw near to God* in *his houſe*, Heb. 10. 21, 22. and 11. 28. Now ſince all allow that Rom. 6. 4. ſignifies our obligation to die to ſin, and to walk in newneſs of life; which is as much as to own that it ſignifies our ſanctification, why are they ſo fond of a mode which typified juſtification, unleſs they mean to confound them together, as too many do? It was not *Iſrael*'s holineſs or good works that ſecured them from the deſtroying angels ſtroke, but it was the *ſprinkling of blood*, which pointed directly to *Chriſt our paſſover* who is *ſacrificed for us*, 1 Cor. 5. 7.

And ſince we are ſo often refer'd to the baptiſm of the ſpirit, let it be noted that it is only an extraordinary degree of it which is called a baptiſm. The diſciples ſurely had a meaſure of it when they were converted, and when Jeſus appeared to them after his reſurrection, he breathed on them and ſaid, *Receive ye the holy Ghoſt*, John 20.22. Yet all this is not called a baptiſm; but on the day of his aſcention he commanded them to wait at *Jeruſalem* for that promiſed bleſſing, *For*, ſaid he, John *truly baptiſed with water*; *but ye ſhall be baptized with the holy Ghoſt, not many days hence*, Acts 1. 5. Alſo let it be obſerved that we are often referred to the baptiſm of the Spirit, in order to find the meaning of the word, which they ſay is by ſprinkling or pouring; yet when we come to Rom. 6. 4. they would have it, that *burying* there has no reference to literal, but to ſpiritual baptiſm. Thus again their ways are *moveable*, and not *ſtrait paths*. I leave it therefore to the readers judgment, who are "confuſed

fuſed and ſuperſtitious about the mode," p. 31. either thoſe who hold that we are *buried* in baptiſm, or thoſe who ſay tis as well to be *ſprinkled*, without being able to produce one text in the bible where that word is applied to baptiſm.

To ſum up all, I think I have made it appear that Mr. *F.* is not juſt in charging us with ſticking to the letter, ſo as not to regard the nature of God's will contained therein, and have ſhewn that we regard the "divine *harmony* of the ſcriptures," which he holds to be a ſure token that we underſtand them right. And I leave it to be conſidered, whether he has not been taken in both of the ſnares which he cautioned others againſt: That is, whether his imagination has not been ſo elevated with *houſholds* being in covenant, while at the ſame time he ſticks ſo cloſe to the letter of the words, *To thee and to thy ſeed*,—as to miſtake what the divine will is therein. The main body of his diſcourſe is taken up in proving that the bleſſings of grace were diſcovered to *Abraham*, which no body will deny; but what is that to his purpoſe, ſo long as it appears that all thoſe covenants that included parents with their children, were in that reſpect figurative of Chriſt and his ſaints? Yea *Adam*, as he ſtood the covenant head of his poſterity, was a *figure of Him that was to come*, Rom. 5. 14. Therefore if the ſubſtance of thoſe ſhadows is come, how can the external covenant be the ſame? And if he ſtill thinks it is, then I deſire he would ſhew why *Aaron*'s covenant does not entail the miniſtry to a natural line, as much as *Abraham*'s can church-membership, or a right to ordinances.

He frequently charges us with antinomianiſm, yet all the colour of proof that our principles have any tendency that way, that I can find from him, lies in three things. 1. He ſays, if the holineſs in Cor. 7. 14. "Reſpects not ſomething of a religious right, or

"what

" what is ſacred, then I grant, it means as the baptiſts " ſay ; and the conſequence I think cannot be avoided, " that all children that are not begotten in faith, or in " the new covenant, muſt be baſtards : A rank anti- " nomian principle, againſt the light of nature !" P. 24. This is notable reaſoning ! It is as much as to ſay, ' becauſe we hold, that a man's being brought into ' the faith no ways diſſolves his former marriage, that ' therefore the unavoidable conſequence is, that his chil- ' dren which he had then are illegitimate !' Rather is not the concluſion plain in the text, that if their cohabiting as man and wife were not warranted by the law of Chriſt, then their children muſt be unclean in our ſenſe of the word ? Here alſo we have another inſtance of the *moveable ways* of our opponents ; for they all own that this text ſhews that the ceremonial law (by which the *Jews wives and ſuch as were born of them*, were *put away*, *Ezra* 10. 3.) is not now in force ; and they take the ſenſe of the word *ſanctified*, as we do, from the goſpel, 1 Tim. 4. 3—5. Yet they turn directly back, and take their ſenſe of the word *holy* from the ceremonial law, which is out of date : And call us antinomians, becauſe we will not go in theſe *crooked ways* with them !

2. Mr. *F.* inſinuates that our doing what he calls re-baptizing, leads to antinomianiſm, p. 4, 5. " He calls it " a devouring that which is holy : But if a ſoul is con- vinced that infant-ſprinkling has no warrant from the bible, what crime can it be to leave it, and practice what is plainly commanded therein ? Yea, he allows ſuch acting to be right ; but preſumes to aſſert that we do not act ſo. P. 30. However, as long as we know that we do, his cenſure will not move us ; unleſs it be with pity for his raſhneſs. A third thing that he repeatedly brings, is, that ſome perſons of our denomination have run into antinomian errors ; which, unleſs he had prov-

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ed that our principles had a tendency that way, is about as good reaſoning, as it is for an infidel to bring *Judas* and *Simon Magus* to prove chriſtianity to be a deluſion. And ſince Mr. *F.* has declared his intention of enlarging upon that ſubject, if I publiſh my anſwer to him; I ſhall only deſire him to take his late book, and turn to what he has wrote concerning the like treatment, which he and his brethren have received from thoſe called ſtanding miniſters; where he juſtly obſerves that he and his brethren, "are no more to account for "thoſe out of covenant, than the ſtanding miniſters are "for every corrupt, profane, immoral perſon, that "waits upon their miniſtry." * And if he acts according to his own rule, I am not afraid of his hurting us; and if he acts contrary thereto, he will only expoſe himſelf in trying to expoſe others.

I ſuppoſe what I have now wrote, together with the foregoing ſermon, may ſerve as a ſufficient anſwer to what Mr. *Frothingham* has printed on this ſubject; and ſhall only add, that in a letter to me, he ſays, "You "may remember, brother, that ſome years back we "ſtood in union together in the ſpirit and practice of "the goſpel, and now it is broke, thro' your practice." On which I would obſerve, that he knows our covenant (like that of our fathers) was, "Still to be looking for "more light from God, which is contained in the ſacred "ſcriptures." † Which covenant I conſcientiouſly adhere to unto this day, though I have been harſhly treated by many therefor.

This brings to mind what I met with in a late journey into the northern part of our country. A learned miniſter of the common denomination, had challenged a public diſpute about baptiſm, which, as the caſe happened, I could not fairly avoid accepting. It was held

* His Key, p. 29, 35.
† His diſcourſe on the churches privileges, 1750. p. 19.

held in his own pulpit on *October* 30. 1769, before a considerable congregation. We were favoured so as not to have an angry word, that I know of, on either side; yet near the close of above five hours dispute, he charged us with want of *charity*; and said they could have charity for us, if we would for them. I told him, charity was love, and we desired to exercise love towards all, according to their different circumstances; but as to the extending of christian fellowship, the apostle says, *Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*: And just so far as we can unite in any spiritual exercise in the truth, with any persons we desired to do it, and no farther. And as all who hold to the external use of the ordinances, agree that persons ought to be baptized before they come to the ordinance of the supper; therefore we are no more rigid than they, in refusing to partake of the ordinance with unbaptized persons.

Soon after this he shut up his books, and gave a specimen of his *charity* before all the people; for many of them expected, as he had prayed at the beginning, that he would give me the same liberty in the conclusion; but instead of that, after a little pause, he made a motion for me to go out, and the assembly dispersed without any social worship at all. This looks something like what I heard an aged father say some years ago, to wit, That many when they preach up charity and a catholic spirit only mean to have others drop their different sentiments and come in and join with them; but where is the man upon earth, who will not allow as much liberty as that?

I have elsewhere shewn that our fathers and brethren on Mr. *Frothingham*'s side, first broke the union between us;* and I could easily shew how it

* Answer to Mr. *Fish*, p. 118, 119.

appears that many of them are the most rigid unto this day, but as it is an unpleasant task, I chuse to omit it. We are all in danger of a party spirit, which we ought to be on a strict watch against, on all hands. Some accuse us with not allowing them to be visible christians, because we do not hold them to be truly baptized; but what a strange mistake is that? When the point we contend for is, that baptism should be administred to none but visible christians, so that if they are not such before baptism, they cannot be baptized at all.

I shall conclude with the words of a late worthy author, who says, "Why do I trouble the reader "about the communion of saints, in this or the other "particular form? We are fallen in a day when many "devoutly disclaim it. It is now very common to "make light of ordinances, and even for serious per-"sons to talk as if they valued themselves on being "of no denomination of christians; if a man, say they, "loves Jesus Christ, or a preacher sets forth the mercy "of the Father in him, we have no concern about his "form of religion; yet they cry up the martyrs, "many of whom might have saved their treasure and "blood, had they made no conscience of the authority "of Christ in his house. The upright will deprecate "a meer name, under any form, however agreable to "the dictates of scripture, but if a man intends by his "being of no denomination, that he regards not the "*manner of service* appointed by the Lord; where "is his religion?——If Christ is preached, and the "power of godliness prevails, by whomsoever, or "whatever particular form of profession, his ministers "and people rejoice; yet, if judicious; not so but that "wherein a man appears defective, in any doctrine of "the gospel, or article of instituted worship, they "must wish him to know the way of the Lord more

"perfectly

" perfectly, and conſequently, rather in meekneſs point " out his miſtake than join him in his error.——In a " word, that notion of charity, that renders the ſub- " ject indifferent about any thing which he is per- " ſuaded to be the will of Chriſt, is falſe and pernici- " ous; it tends to captivate the minds of men from " the authority of God, and ſap the foundation of all " true religion; it is therefore dangerous, when under " any pretence, perſons are taught to be unconcerned " about the appointed form of worſhip; it ſhould " rather be commended to every one to ſearch the " ſcripture, and keep to that which his conſcience " directs, and regard not the cenſures of men." *

* Lectures on primitive Chriſtianity, by Mr. *Benjamin Wallin*, preface, pag. 7——11 As this, and another work I have lately met with, are but newly come into the country, I would beg leave here to ſpeak my thoughts of them. The other is, 'A body of doctrinal Divinity; or a ſyſtem of evangelical 'truths, deduced from the ſacred ſcriptures: By *John Gill*, 'D. D.' And I think I can heartily recommend this latter for doctrinal, the other for practical divinity, as being as excellent compoſures on thoſe ſubjects as any human writings that I have ſeen; and wiſh they may ſpread much in this country. They were both printed laſt year in *London*, and Mr. *Fleeman* of *Boſton* has a few of them to diſpoſe of. Dr. *Gill*'s work contains 1091 pages in large quarto, at 36*s*. lawful money, if bound in two parts, or 34*s*. bound in one. Mr. *Wallin*'s lectures contain 507 pages in handſome octavo, at 8*s*.

ERRATA: Page 10. l. 2. fr. bot r. *magnifies*.—P. 21. l. 2. r. *were*, inſtead of *was*.—P. 27. l. 13. r. *pour*, f. *power*.

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I. THE nature and neceſſity of an internal call to preach the goſpel. 1754.

II. A ſhort deſcription of the Bond-woman and the free, as they are the two covenants. 1756. A ſecond edition, with an anſwer to Mr. *Frothingham*. 1770.

III. A ſermon on ſpiritual ignorance, from Acts 13. 27. 1763.

IV. A letter to Mr. *Lord*. 1764.

V. A ſermon on family prayer. 1766.

VI. A diſcourſe on faith, with remarks on Mr. *Sandeman*. 1767.

VII. An anſwer to Mr. *Fiſh*. 1768.

VIII. A funeral ſermon for Mrs. *Elizabeth Backus*, with account of her life. 1769.